



A Sensual Feast: A Tour of the Shop Floor of the Ludlow Food Centre with Edward Berry

Transcript of Episode #039 of *The Artisan Food & Drink Business Show*

Catherine Moran: Hello, and welcome to episode 39 of *The Artisan Food & Drink Business Show*, the show where artisan producers tell their brand story and share the secrets of their success. I'm your host, Catherine Moran.

Today's episode, the first of a two-part series, features Edward Berry who takes us on a virtual tour of the shop floor of the Ludlow Food Centre. This episode is a feast for your senses.

At the time of our interview, Edward was the Managing Director of the Ludlow Food Centre. After more than four years in that role, he was just starting to prepare his next career move, again in the world of fine food and drink, by setting up his own food and drink consultancy. Edward talks about his new consultancy in part 2 of this episode.

I featured The Ludlow Food Centre before on the show, with Marketing Manager Tom Hunt, in episodes 15 and 16. Episode 15 is all about marketing this multimillion-pound food and drink business and episode 16 is all about food and drink packaging, copy and PR. So, do check out these episodes, too. You can find them at myartisanbusiness.com.

Back to today's episode, which opens with Edward telling the story of his career in food and drink. It's nothing if not illustrious. Let me give you a snap shot: he cut his teeth in the brutal kitchens of Claridges in London, where verbal abuse was the plat du jour if you were a lowly commis waiter. He served lunch to three European queens. He worked in 5-star hotels in London and Paris, including cooking at The Savoy Grill in London. That must have been just simply amazing.

Edward then immersed himself in the world of fine wine, working for Moët & Chandon, the great champagne house, and, after that, he was the boss of global marketing for a now established but then upstart New World wine-maker. There's more, including setting up his own café and deli as well as running an Anglo-Indian tea company. What a truly astonishing — mouth-watering — curriculum vitae.

After hearing about Edward's career in food and drink, we then move out of Edward's office and go down to the 4,000 square feet shop floor of the Ludlow Food Centre.

Floor-to-ceiling glass-fronted production kitchens surround the shop floor. So transparency, as well as food theatre, is the order of the day.

Edward describes the food and drink made at the Food Centre, including the cheeses, butter, yoghurt, ice-cream and other desserts from The Dairy, the coffee from the Coffee Roasting Room, the meats and charcuterie from The Butchery, the pies and other deli foods from The Kitchen, the bread and cakes from The Bakery and the jams, marmalades, chutneys and pickles from Jams and Pickles.

Let's now hear from Edward Berry in his capacity as Managing Director of the Ludlow Food Centre.

Catherine Moran: I'm with Edward Berry who is the managing director of the Ludlow Food Centre. Welcome, Edward, to *The Artisan Food & Drink Business Show*. Thank you so much for your time this morning.

Edward Berry: Thank you, Catherine, very much for inviting me.

Catherine Moran: It's my pleasure. Before we talk about your role in the Ludlow Food Centre, could you give us a little background on what you did before becoming MD of the Food Centre?

Edward Berry: I've got a bit of a "Jack of all trades" sort of life... working life. I'm glad to say I have been in work... I had a brief dabble at university, but decided, actually, other things were calling, so I went into the hotel business.

Food has been a part of my life... I maintain, I think I first cooked some scrambled eggs aged four, and food has always been a part of my life. I'm not a big fan of the word "foodie", but if it defines what I am, someone who loves food, enjoys food, considers food at probably most times of the day. Food called, and so I decided that the nearest, or the most inviting area of food, was to go into the hotel business.

So I went to work in a number of five star hotels in London and in Paris under a management-training scheme. I started off as a rather junior waiter at Claridges, where you were not allowed anywhere near the customers for a period of time. In fact, I lost a stone and a half running between the restaurant and the kitchen, encountering some of the, perhaps somewhat archaic ways that the chefs behaved in those days. There was a lot of shouting, and a certain amount of alcohol abuse, I suspect.

I remember an occasion where I was being called by the commis waiter, he said... No, the commis waiter was me, the chef de rang [a waiter in charge of a station in a restaurant]... We had all these very traditional names in the industry in those days, and I had to go and get the food. I went to the pass, and I said to the sous chef, "Where's table four?" He looked at me, and he swore at me, and he said he was never going to give me any food because *I'd asked*. I went back up, and I said, "I think we've got a problem here." It was a little bit like that, but I loved it, absolutely loved it.

Then they allowed me into the restaurant. I think the first thing I was allowed to do, apart from lay tables and clean up, was to serve from the traditional dessert trolley, which was a thing of beauty in those days, with lots of cream and... I loved that. Our customers were very traditional, of a certain age, from very well known and very... Those sorts of families. I remember serving three queens, and by that I mean Greece, Denmark, and Spain. I think they're all related, they were having lunch together. It was that sort of ambience; this was Claridges.

With this dessert trolley you could get them to choose things, and it was sort of a selling thing, but you could always sell them a little bit of hot chocolate sauce, or a little bit of cream. I do remember on one occasion I was pushing the trolley, and I thought I heard a slight clunk, but actually I did look back. A customer said, "I think you've lost something." A beautiful bowl of profiteroles had dropped off the back, and they were rolling away leaving a beautiful trail of icing sugar and whipped cream. I had a lot of fun there.

I ended up cooking at The Savoy, in the Savoy Grill. I did that for a year, which I loved. Incredibly hard work. I mean, split shifts, very long days, painfully hot. A *lot* of abuse. It was a very aggressive place, but we turned out a lot of food. The Grill was, in those days, the place that all the great and good went. Lunchtime, dinner, whatever. I enjoyed it. Worked hard. I then worked in other areas of the business. I was in Paris working as a concierge, which I loved, which gave me a chance to eat at all of the three-star Michelin restaurants in Paris, because I made money. As a concierge I made money, and we got commissions on things. It was an extraordinary life, so I got to know Paris very well.

Then I found myself visiting the Champagne region as a guest of someone, and I thought, "I like this". Wine and champagne. So, having decided to return to London from Paris, I applied to the great Moët & Chandon, which was the big champagne house. I got the wrong address. Mine was the most cack-handed application going. However, it arrived at the right time, I was invited in for an interview. I was still living in Paris, flew in for an interview. This was an interview with a difference. We had lunch. We had 1960s vintage Moët at lunch, I mean... Which I think is a really good idea, I recommend it! And they

offered me the job, so I joined the team, and I worked there. Then I was really into the wine trade, so I worked for them, I worked for Justerini & Brooks, traditional wine merchants. I worked for John Harvey, who owned Bristol Cream, but who also had a wine merchant's division. I then went to work for Krug Champagne. Again, sort of immersed in those luxury brands.

Then I had an opportunity, and I went to work for a business based in Australia and New Zealand, which had wineries in Western Australia, a place called Margaret River, which is south of Perth. A business called Cape Mentelle. The chap who started it had also set up another business in New Zealand called Cloudy Bay. *That was just the most amazing story*, and I was the... I grew through the ranks, I looked after Europe on the sales and marketing side.

I then took over the rest of the northern hemisphere. I launched us in the USA. I then took over the total marketing of this brand globally, which I did for twelve years. An amazing time, travelling all over the world, eating all over the world. The food theme continues throughout, because I was lucky enough to be in interesting places doing wine dinners, meeting chefs, tasting foods in the Far East, the Middle East, the Southern Hemisphere, the Northern Hemisphere, you name it. And Cloudy Bay was an opportunity, because people thought this was an interesting wine. They'd never heard of New Zealand wine. We were real pioneers. It had caught the imagination, people found this extraordinary.

When they first tasted it, it wasn't traditional sauvignon blanc. We're so used to this style now, but the sauvignon blancs of the previous generations were predominantly from the Loire Valley, from the central vineyards. Sancerre, Pouilly Fumé, and these places. It was a rather austere style of wine. These guys were producing something that had flavours of exotic fruits, and it was all to do with the Marlborough climate. You're on the north end of the south island. You've got *intense* sunlight, not overly hot, long growing season, and a real build up of these amazing flavours. Now we're all used to Marlborough sauvignon blancs, we buy them in the... It was a very exciting time to be involved in wine. But it ran its course.

Then my partner and I decided we wanted to start our own business, so we went into the café-deli business, and we set up our little businesses, which were called Armadillo. We had Armadillo Café and Armadeli.

Catherine Moran: Oh right, yes.

Edward Berry: We ran those, enjoyed those. We had them in London, Marlborough in Wiltshire. Our thing in London was really we wanted to bring the countryside to London. We didn't want to be overly clever, but we wanted to say to people, "This is a café, however *that* ham sandwich, we got it from the guy who actually raised the pigs. The yoghurt, we pick it from the guy who gets the yoghurt" You know, in those days, 2002, -3, -4. That was still reasonably innovative, and we were in the sort of west part of London, and people understood that. I think they appreciated it. We found lovely cheeses, and so our cheese sandwich was not just made with the cheapest cheese from the cash and carry. It actually had a rather nice cheese called Ashmore, which we found. That was interesting.

We also got very into coffee, and we learned a lot about coffee. We learnt about espresso and styles of coffee. We found, to our horror, that most of the coffee around the place was pretty poor. Things have moved, but this was sort of early days of the real interest in coffee. We got very close to the people roasting, and we understood about roasting and freshness.

Then the deli really was an extension of that, the key points being that my cheeses were all British and Irish. I also got into making ice cream. I went and learned from Italians, so I actually set up a little ice cream business, created a little mini-, mini-factory with proper equipment making traditional ice cream in the Italian style. I did about forty different flavours. I won gold at the Great Taste Awards for my damson ice cream.

Catherine Moran: You're joking. Fancy that. Wow! [laughs]

Edward Berry: [Laughs] Which I know is very close to your heart. I loved all of that, and I had some good wholesale accounts. I even spoke to one of the rather high end London shops about doing their

own label for them, but I just wasn't quite big enough. Then we decided we'd sell. We'd got to the stage where we were either going to go to the next stage, as you do with a business, where you're very much in control and either grow and grow and then lose touch, lose control, or you say, "Well, actually..." It was very, very hard work, it was extremely hard work. We did well, we were loved, people came to us. We had terrific customers, we had a good following, but we just decided that enough was enough.

My partner wanted to continue with part of the business, which she developed, which was the coffee business, and she has continued and now has a wholesale business, still called Armadillo Coffee Company, and although she doesn't roast, she sources her coffee through one particular roaster, who she's worked with now for twelve/fifteen years. Her customers are trade customers. They're caterers, they're pubs, hotels, that sort of world. She also advises and helps with selection of equipment, and there's the sort of after service, after sale service. That's very much her business and very personal to her.

Because of course, at the Ludlow Food Centre, we also roast coffee here, so that was an interesting... We agreed to sort of not try and clash on that one. After that came to an end, I actually went into the tea business. I was Marketing Director and then Chief Operating Officer of a company called Newby Teas, which is London based even though it's an Anglo-Indian tea company, privately owned.

I had an interesting time learning about tea. I'm convinced that if you have a sort of feel for these things, then something like tea, or coffee, or wine, you know, you want to know more. That's the sort of person I am. I loved it with wine, discovering region styles, grape varieties, qualities, producers. Then the same with coffee, discovered there was whole load of interesting things going on with coffee. Then tea, most people drink fairly poor tea, because tea is a sort of hot beverage that takes you thirty seconds to create in the morning, and you probably pay a penny or 2p for a tea bag. You're not expecting a great culinary experience.

Take it to the next stage and it opens up a wonderful world. That was the next thing for me, and I went to China, India, learned about tea, and became an avid tea drinker. Still drink a lot of coffee, and happy to drink wine.

Catherine Moran: Yes.

Edward Berry: Then that was an interesting... I was enjoying that, and I was in London, and I'd travelled quite a bit. It was just one of those days when you're flicking through... You're looking at *The Grocer*, as you do, and I spotted this job ad. I thought, "Hang on a minute, this has got my name written all over it". This was at The Ludlow Food Centre, to take over management of that. I had given it no thought, really, in terms of that it was going to be in South Shropshire. I thought, "We'll sort of wing that one". I was just interested in the whole exercise. Hadn't been here, but I applied nevertheless, and then obviously did visit. Then went through the interview process, and they very kindly offered me the job, which was about four-and-a-half years ago.

The Ludlow Food Centre's been my home. This is not just a job. Obviously I moved, I live on the estate here, the estate this is... We're on a large farming estate, which is the source of most of the food, or a lot of the food that we sell. I've made myself a part of the community, been involved in local activities here, made a lot of friends here. Really the team at the Food Centre, there's now one-hundred-and-thirty people working here in one guise or another, part-time and full-time people. Many of them have become very close friends, and I call them my extended family.

This is not a job for a Monday to Friday, and particularly since we took over the local hotel. I don't even sleep knowing that the place is closed, because we're still trading.

Catherine Moran: That's The Clive?

Edward Berry: The Clive.

Catherine Moran: Just next door.

Edward Berry: Yeah.

Catherine Moran: Yeah, mm-hmm (affirmative).

Edward Berry: That takes me back to my early days, funnily enough, it's almost like I've come full circle. I have a hotel to manage.

Catherine Moran: Yes. Yeah. Well, that's just phenomenal, and a deeply impressive pedigree in good food and good drink. It's striking that it all started off with you wanting to cook some scrambled eggs when you were something like four, I think you said, which is very young. That suggests that you've got a very highly developed food philosophy. I know you don't like that word "foodie", and I'm not mad on it myself, but *how would you* describe your food philosophy?

Edward Berry: I... It's a difficult one, because food... There's been food evolution in so many directions, which I applaud. I think it's fascinating what people have achieved. We were lucky enough to go to El Bulli when it was open. Here's a man who, I don't think he even likes the word... there are various descriptions of his food. Gastro-...

Catherine Moran: Yeah. [Molecular] Gastronomy.

Edward Berry: But as an exercise, and as an experience... Actually, it's quite a humorous experience, he doesn't just say this is all terribly clever. He makes it humorous. That's one side of it, but actually, if you really get down to it, I like food that is authentic, genuine. I've taken the trouble to find out about provenance. My business is not to... I'm not Hugh Fearnley [Whittingstall]. I have no mission.

Actually, that's rubbish, I *do* have one mission. In this country I have found food to be socially divisive, and I think that's a great shame. As someone who's spent quite a lot of time in Southern Europe where we... Actually, in the Far East as well, where we feel that families eat together, that they all enjoy good food, and any food programmes, even the most basic level, the family are grinding, they're cooking, they're roasting. You see a family activity going on. It seems in this country that there's a sort of dismissive view that good food is for the middle classes, that food has to be cheap, and if you like food you're slightly odd.

I remember on many occasions, I'd see people walking past my shops, and you would see them looking inside, and they'd clearly decided it wasn't for them, and I wanted to grab them and say, "Have I got it wrong, is this scary? Because it's not meant to be. Come in and taste something. If you don't like it that's absolutely up to you, but don't miss an opportunity". Now, we know not everybody is passionate about food, it's the bit in the middle where you don't want to know and you see it as being for somebody else, "That's not for me".

Yes, I know, a fiendishly expensive restaurant is clearly not for everybody, but that's not what I'm talking about, either. I'm actually talking about value. I think value's important. We have this issue. Cheap meat, cheap food. I say, well actually if you shop well, you will find good food that doesn't cost any more... Particularly if you do buy as close to the source as possible, farm shops and that sort of thing, you are buying less packaging, fewer food miles, and the price... Yes, there might be a premium.

I make a rather stupid comparison, I say, "Do you think a Rolls Royce is expensive?" Well it is, but you probably sort of think there's a reason for it, not just the brand. You probably think that there's been amazing technology, it's been hand-built, its limited edition. Well, therefore why would you make the assumption that all food should be the same price? All meat should be the same price? Mass produced meat has got economies of scale. It's intensively reared; it's cheaper to produce, job done.

A beautiful piece of meat that's come from a cow that's lovingly reared, it's costs are going to be higher, but don't dismiss it. You're buying... Like the Rolls Royce, if you can afford the Rolls Royce you might buy it. I'm saying if you can afford the meat, you don't have to stretch yourself that far to buy meat well. I don't recommend eating fillet steak. Personally don't think it's a particularly exciting piece of meat. You ask a good butcher, and if you find a good butcher hang on to him, he'll find you the interesting piece of meat. Might be slow cooking rather than flash fry, and there are ways. Making meat work. I buy a chicken. I never buy pieces of chicken. I cannot understand the sense of buying pieces of chicken. I buy a chicken, I chop it up, or I roast it. I do bones for stock.

It's not clever cooking. We're going back in time, really. I suppose I've got a philosophy of just be adventurous, but also try and understand a little where food comes from. I think we've had interesting times here where we've sort of pushed the boat a bit and introduced products just because we think people are going to want them. And actually, we've almost pushed too hard, and this is maybe... Perhaps a place like Ludlow Food Centre is not a place for innovation. It's a place for almost going back to basics and traditions. I mean, it can be innovative. John, our butcher, is a very innovative butcher. He's curing meats, he's doing things that butchers don't generally do. He's producing salamis and coppa and all sorts of interesting things. That's innovative almost with tradition behind it.

Catherine Moran: Yeah. I was going to ask you, you mentioned provenance and how important the whole provenance side of food is. Not just to you, but also of course to the Ludlow Food Centre. Would you give a snapshot of the Ludlow Food Centre?

Edward Berry: I will, but actually there's probably only one way to give you a proper snapshot, which is for us to go have a walk round the shop.

Catherine Moran: Wow, that would be absolutely fantastic.

Edward Berry: Why don't we go and do that?

Catherine Moran: Wonderful, thank you very much.

So we're now standing on the floor of the Ludlow Food Centre.

Edward Berry: The Ludlow Food Centre has been here since 2007 and it is based on a true farm shop. We're in the middle of an estate, 8,000-acre estate, of which 6,000 are farmed, arable and livestock. This is a business that was set up primarily to sell the produce from the estate.

All of the meat that we sell has been bred here. We make cheeses using our own milk and yogurt and other dairy products. We source local produce for making jams and pickles and as we go around I'll show you what we do. The point of it is, it's not just a shop. This is not a supermarket or

even just a traditional retailer because most of what we sell, we make ourselves and I mean genuinely we make it. The people who make it, they work here, they work at the Food Centre. They're employed by the Food Centre. When you see produce on the shelf, the chances are we've made it ourselves.

More importantly, perhaps, is that we like to show people what we make. Around the side of the shop, there are little units in which are artisan food producers making the food that we sell. If we take a little tour around the shop, I can show you where we are.

Catherine Moran: Absolutely wonderful.

Edward Berry: As you come into the shop we turn left and the first thing you'll see is a dairy counter and this is actually a new addition to the shop. If you look behind the dairy counter you will see a door leading through into the dairy and this is the place where we make our dairy products. You've got all the equipment required for making our seven of eight cheeses. We make yoghurt, we also make butter. To the right of it, there's another section where we make our own ice cream and all of the puddings that require fresh cream, fresh milk, that we make ourselves such as cheesecakes, trifles and things like that.

Here we have a cheese counter and everybody that works here is trained by our cheese makers. The information that they can pass on, I think, is exemplary because they've become very knowledgeable. They learn how to make cheese as well as sell cheese.

We carry a broad range of cheeses but obviously we're keen to promote and talk about the cheeses we make ourselves. For example Oakley Park Cheddar, which we can mature up to about 20 months. We have a cheese maturing room at the back of the food centre. Sadly you can't see it. It's actually one of the nicest buildings. If you like cheese, rows of quietly, maturing cheeses are really very, very special indeed.

Catherine Moran: It's a real treat. I have actually peeked in there once or twice. Yes, it's really nice.

Edward Berry: If you ask really nicely, we can have a look today. Then we make traditional blue cheeses. Perhaps the two are quite well-known, we have Ludlow Blue, which we maintain is unusual in being a true Shropshire blue made in Shropshire and we use the bluing process which you'd find in traditional cheeses such as Stilton but it has a little bit of colour, for which we use organic carrot juice.

Cheeses traditionally have something called annatto, which is a colouring that adds that orangey colour. The reason cheeses had a little bit of colour was because the colour of the milk was traditionally quite dark depending on the breed and depending on the feed. People were used to a little bit of colour. Cheeses over the years, cheeses like Red Leicester, have added a bit of colour. We have a little bit of colour in our Ludlow Blue and then we have a traditional blue as well which we call Blue Remembered Hills, which takes its name from the famous A.E. Houseman book of poetry, *A Shropshire Lad* and he talks about "the blue remembered hills", so it's a local word.

We've got a particularly popular cheese, which we call The Cheese With No Name. Yes, it is called The Cheese With No Name. We couldn't come up with a solution. We put it out to competition and no winners, so it is The Cheese With No Name. It's a natural blue cheese like a small Camembert but it has a little bit of extra double cream. We then have a cheese that we call Croft Gold, which is into the stinky world. For those who like Époisses and Livarot, it's in that vein. It gets its smell because you get, after pressing, it develops a little bit of mould and we wash it in Herefordshire brandy. You get that slightly sticky texture and sort of reasonably powerful aroma. We make a substantial range of cheeses here at the Ludlow Food Centre.

Catherine Moran: We've got something like 40 or 50 different cheeses here in front of us. Where are the Ludlow Food Centre cheeses in this display? Over here on the right?

Edward Berry: If you look here amongst the hard cheeses, you'll find the Oakley Park Cheddar and the traditional cheddar. We've made our cheeses with vegetarian rennet but we've now made... we wanted to see how things would compare, so

we've made one that is called traditional where we've used the traditional rennet and we liked the flavours that we got from that. We made a little bit of cheese recently with some sheep's milk and we've enjoyed making that. That's been quite successful, in different styles.

Catherine Moran: Is that the Lady Holton smoked down there?

Edward Berry: We have a smoked cheese, which is smoked over beech, it's a natural smoke. A lot of smoked cheeses are actually with flavoured smoke, so it's a true smoked cheese and it's delicious. It's quite a full smoke. We believe if you want to make a smoked cheese, it's got to be there. Then we carry a range of cheeses from other parts of the country and other parts of the world. We have tried to specialise a little bit in local cheeses, quite a few Welsh cheeses. Obviously, we've got cheeses not far from us such as Cheshire cheeses-

Catherine Moran: Double Gloucestershire from Appleby's, Appleby's Cheshire, Hereford Hop. Absolutely wonderful selection. Yeah. Great.

Edward Berry: If we continue round the room, you'll see a display here of ice cream and yoghurt and cream cheeses and I mentioned earlier on that ice cream is quite close to my heart. I brought quite a few of my recipes so we've developed our own range of ice creams, obviously made using our own estate-reared milk.

For example we've got a seasonal one at the moment, minced pie ice cream. This has got nice texture to it. Bearing in mind that our minced pie is a product that we make here ourselves. We make our own minced meat and our own pastry and then we incorporate that into a white-based ice cream.

Catherine Moran: What are some of the other flavours here in this display fridge?

Edward Berry: Well, we follow trends so we've got salted caramel.

Catherine Moran: You can't not do that, clearly!

Edward Berry: That's somewhat unavoidable. Then traditional vanilla, we have pistachio, we have chocolate, raspberry. Damson, obviously, is very important in this part of the world...

Catherine Moran: Yes, beautiful colour. It's a...

Edward Berry: ... That's a sorbet actually rather than an ice cream.

Catherine Moran: Very different texture. It's very tough to make a good dark chocolate ice cream, I think.

Edward Berry: It is. Part of the problem is you actually need to incorporate the chocolate when you're making the ice cream rather than adding it as a flavour, if that makes sense. The best dark chocolate ice creams with a really intense dark chocolate, it's a process and also it's the quality of the chocolate. There's a temptation with many things to perhaps skimp a little bit and I always say you need good, good chocolate to make good chocolate ice cream. You'll never make great chocolate ice cream with bad chocolate.

Catherine Moran: Sure. Absolutely.

Edward Berry: Then our cheesecakes. Again, it's all made by us, so we're making our own cream cheese, we're making our own bases and obviously fruits that we have here.

Catherine Moran: Wow! What a selection of yoghurts. Apple, cinnamon and sultana, damson yoghurt, honeyed natural yoghurt, lemon curd, yoghurt with quince and cranberry, another seasonal one.

Edward Berry: Well, I arrived we didn't make any yoghurt at all and I couldn't quite understand why we hadn't given it a go. We experimented with a number of different styles. At one stage we looked at sort of a Greek style, which is sort of a strained yoghurt. Actually what we settled on is... To me it's yoghurt that I knew as a child. It's a very traditional style of yoghurt. It's quite acid. It's one of those yoghurts that young children would probably like a couple spoons of sugar in or some honey. It lends itself very well to flavours as well. It's good on its own, but when we've done the apple, cinnamon and sultana or

damson when we make a compote, it works very well and it's been a nice addition.

Catherine Moran: I see you've got, incidentally, two stars there for the lemon curd yoghurt from the Great Taste Awards, that's pretty impressive.

Edward Berry: Well, thank you. That was from 2014. We submit quite a lot of products to the Great Taste Awards because we don't really sell much beyond here. It's always a bit of a challenge as to whether it's worthwhile but it helps us, I think, to be endorsed by using someone else's word and I think my colleagues here who spend a lot of time working hard to make these lovely foods, it's nice that someone else has recognised their quality.

Catherine Moran: Absolutely. Which raises the question of marketing but perhaps we could talk about that later on. Is that your dessert room there? That's the ice cream room?

Edward Berry: The ice cream and desserts. This is Miles, who's responsible for making all of these.

Catherine Moran: That used to be my kitchen, actually.

Edward Berry: Then there's a slightly usual part of activities here, which is roasting coffee.

Catherine Moran: What a wonderful-looking machine.

Edward Berry: It's a traditional, very traditional,, I think it's German-made. Small batches, it takes just two kilos at a time. The essence of, or the story behind our coffee roasting here is, that it's done by a person and they're monitoring as they roast. Over-roasting coffee will give you a burnt product. We get green beans from a number of different countries. Essentially, Africa, South America. All the areas where coffee is traditionally grown. We bring in green beans and then we roast them in small batches. We sell a good amount. We obviously put the coffee through our own establishments, so we have our café here and we opened a small café in Ludlow in July of last year, which we called The Ludlow Pantry, which could be part of a programme to expand our businesses and have these

little satellites in other places. That's a vehicle for our coffee as well.

Catherine Moran: Sure. Yes. Got some wonderful alcoholic tipples here on the left.

Edward Berry: Well, we try and support a lot of the local producers. We have a good number of artisans and spirit and liqueur producers. Chilton, for example, who produced the Damson gin, which I'm sure you know well.

Catherine Moran: Yes, indeed. Yes. There's the Chase range, smoked vodka, William's Gin.

Edward Berry: Yes. Chase. William Chase who had the Tyrrell's crisp brand and this was his next venture. He's also bought a vineyard in Provence. We support him. We've also got the Ludlow distillery, which also owns The Ludlow vineyard. Good neighbours. Some English wines from English and Welsh vineyards, as well.

Catherine Moran: A growing thing I understand.

Edward Berry: Now, we've come to the butchery counter. The butchery business here is really at the heart of a lot of what we do. If you think about it, it's our own estate meat, so it's absolutely key to the farm. However, we sell meat here as raw meat, we also produce our own charcuterie, but we also have a production kitchen, making ready meals, so the meat is then going there. It forms a part of our internal production.

We've also got, not only a café, we've got a restaurant. Those are taking meat from here. All of the meat that you buy, if you have dinner at The Clive, which is our restaurant, it's all our own meat. If you're sitting in The Ludlow Kitchen, which is our cafe, having something like a pork pie, it's all been made here. It continues the provenance story and it means the butchery is absolutely key to our business.

Probably the jewel in the crown is our Gloucestershire Old Spot [pigs]. We have one of the larger herds of Gloucestershire Old Spots in the country.

Catherine Moran: Gosh, I didn't know that.

Edward Berry: It's not very big but it's one of the large-... Breeding these rare breed pigs is not easy. They're not what the butchery industry really wants; they're too small. They're not well designed for things like bacon: they have too much fat. However, they're *delicious* and from our point of view, it's absolutely perfect. It gives us a point of interest and John, here, our head butcher, John Brereton, has a very close relationship with Darrell who looks after the pigs, which means that he communicates with him on timing or how the pigs look, on feed. Some of our whey from our cheese production goes to feed the pigs, so we've picked up a little bit of that... sort of an Italian story.

John is a very knowledgeable butcher and he works... In today's butchery, there are fewer and fewer butchers that are working with whole carcass, either because they don't have the skills or they don't have the customers, because their customers want pre-packed meat. They want things that they can recognise. Whereas, what John is doing, it's whole carcass, which means he's got to find a home for everything. So he's quite innovative with his cuts of meat. He's obviously now got a kitchen to send things through to.

When I say to him, "What would happen if we went into the wholesale business?" He said, "That's fine. You'll get a call from a restaurant that want 30 fillets. What do you want me to do with the rest?" The filet represents about 2% of the carcass. What are we going to do with the rest? It's an interesting one from a chef's point of view. I've said to our chefs at The Clive. Turn this into an opportunity because you're going to be selling a plate of food, which has all been sourced by us. The only thing we don't make is the plate. To have a close relationship with your supplier, who is your own butcher, to me, is an opportunity. It may not be perfect because you'd rather be ordering lots of lamb cutlets, but actually, to involve yourself into what John's got, that's available, turns *your creativity* into something quite interesting, if you get it. A lot of chefs wouldn't get that. Those who do, I think it's an interesting exercise.

Catherine Moran: Absolutely. It's an opportunity to be innovative, I was going to say. I see you've got pots of pure beef dripping up here. Interesting. Hard to get hold of that now.

Edward Berry: We've always sold dripping but it was quite an interesting exercise. The Great Taste Awards this year, the product of products... they give a top award to *the* product of the year was... beef dripping. I came back and John and I talk a lot, John our butcher, and I said, "John, you won't believe this!" In previous years, quite a number of products have been meat-based and they've been cured. Guanciale, which is a cured pig's cheek, won, I think, two years ago and I came back and John had a go himself, and he's continued to make it. I said, "It's beef dripping." We've always made beef dripping. It's an interesting thing that beef dripping which is really from the past, if you say to a young person... and John and I have had many conversations about what makes the best chip or the best roast potato and he's convinced that beef dripping. You can keep your goose fat, which of course we also sell and we all love goose fat, but it's an interesting one.

Catherine Moran: Lots of game here as well. You've got a brace of partridge... pheasant?

Edward Berry: Yeah, we're in South Shropshire. We're in an area with plenty of game — hare, rabbits, partridge, pheasant, lots of venison and then obviously we get a little bit of grouse from the estates further north at various times of the year.

Catherine Moran: Wonderful. Here's the meat counter itself, which is very, very impressive. Lots of wonderful aged beef going on there. Some rose veal as well and your leg of mutton — presumably that's the rare breed pork — free-range chicken.

Edward Berry: We do have mutton, which again is unusual, so you got that little bit of age. We do have rose veal. This is not the anaemic veal of the Italian restaurants. This has colour and it has flavour and it is somewhat approaching a traditional beef flavour, but it has a flavour of its own. In all honesty, this is a way to avoid taking out unwanted male livestock and we're very happy and very proud to sell, small amounts. We don't sell a lot of veal because it's not everybody's meat but I enjoy it and we sell it very happily.

We're into our sort of pride, which is our sausages and our bacon. We're curing everything ourselves, we're making our own sausages. Full Gloucestershire Old Spot. We have four or five different types of bacon and a number of different types of sausage and some seasonal variations. John's quite innovative. He tries new sausages at various times of the year.

Catherine Moran: I expect they're very good sellers. The sausages are always popular, aren't they? And a lot of salami, are they your salamis and cured meats in the back there?

Edward Berry: Yes. We've been working on our range of cured meats for the last few years. We've got the traditional ham. This is in the Parma ham world where you've cured with salt over a period. You pack salt around the leg, ensuring the salt completely covers it. During the curing process, it loses a lot of moisture, so you've... It effectively gives you an opportunity to eat what would be raw meat, but you then hang it to break down the enzymes. We hang it, not for a long time. I mean, Parma ham is sometimes 18 months.

These are Gloucestershire Old Spots, they're much smaller legs. We'll cure them for maybe six months. We've been doing that now for a couple of years. We've added to the range with our own salamis. We make chorizo, both the cooking style and the style to eat sliced. We've added coppa, which is a neck muscle, again a cure. We've got fiocco, which is a brand new one that John has recently done. We're also doing some cured beef, bresaola, and a smoked cured beef and John's been experimenting with some lamb as well.

Catherine Moran: Have you got your own smoker?

Edward Berry: We have a smoker. It's a bit of a Heath Robinson... a little number out at the back but it serves our purposes. We've been smoking our bacon for many years.

Catherine Moran: Yes. Staffordshire black streaky bacon. It looks amazing.

Edward Berry: Little bit of sweetness, little bit of treacle.

This is a display of our ready-meals. As you can see, a lot of them have pastry. We're very keen on our pies, steak and ale pies, steak and kidney pies, very traditional. We also have game casserole with traditional herb dumplings. Again, these are very much part and parcel of the sort of products that our customers buy from us and we've built quite a following for them.

Catherine Moran: Wonderful.

Edward Berry: In the deli counter you can see our own produced roast beef, pressed tongue, corned beef. Various types of ham, both the cured hams and the cooked hams, breaded hams and marmalade cures. Here are some of our salamis and chorizos.

Catherine Moran: The pressed tongue, that's quite a blast from the past.

Edward Berry: I think that says something about what we do here and it says something about our customers. They do a little bit like you, sort of, you think, "Oh I haven't had that for a while. I might try it". John occasionally allows me a tongue for home so I slow cook it.

Catherine Moran: Right. You press it yourself?

Edward Berry: No, I'd just eat it.

Then terrines again with our own produce. Then, as with all delis, we carry a range of traditional deli items, olives and pickles. Then we're though to again more of our produce. It is our own produced... We've got pasties, pork-pies. We do these giant sausage rolls, which you buy by the weight. We've got flavours here, sage and onion and pork and cranberry, more of a seasonal one. We've got the famous fidget pie.

Catherine Moran: Yes. I was hoping you were going to come to that. It's one of my most "*favourite-est*" things in the whole world to eat. Would you describe it for us?

Edward Berry: Well, fidget pie, the origins, I think, are sort of lost in history and there's disagreement but it's possible that it was large and it's possible it had five sides. There's a suggestion that "fidget" derives from the word "five". Ours is clearly neither five-sided

nor large. It's a small fidget pie. It's essentially gammon and apple. Slow cooked gammon and apple in a pastry case. The traditional one has pastry on top, ours actually has piped potato, which we think gives it a very characterful look.

Catherine Moran: It's very bumptious. The piping there is very flamboyant.

Edward Berry: Yes.

Catherine Moran: Those chunks of gammon, it's quite a peasant dish but so deeply satisfying.

Edward Berry: I think if you look at... Food's an interesting one. When it comes to the origins of food, there are *huge* numbers of products, which have evolved either through frugality or through need. These are not dishes that were designed by creative chefs with a huge budget. A pork pie is a simple way of taking food in a casing, which means you're protecting it, and producing any sort of curing, drying, smoking — these all predated chill and frozen.

You had salt, which obviously at various times had great value. The salamis of this world were making your pig last your family throughout the year. It's all about using your ingredients in a judicious way because now we see them as things with great flavour. Black puddings. We've made black puddings for many years and we've added a few of our own flavours. The chorizo is a very popular one, using our own chorizo.

Catherine Moran: Scotch eggs. Yeah. They look gorgeous

Edward Berry: We're looking now into our production kitchen. This is Damien McNamara on the right, who's our Head Production Chef. He's a Ballymaloe-trained Irish man.

Catherine Moran: Oh, I see I spoke to Darina Allen recently before the show.

Edward Berry: He speaks fondly of his time there. He started there but he also cooked there professionally. You'll see fidget pie is being made. That's young Alan there.

Catherine Moran: On the right-hand side?

Edward Berry: Yes.

Catherine Moran: Yes.

Edward Berry: Then we've got Zoe and Natalie. They've both been here for many years.

Catherine Moran: She's kneading dough, there? That's quite a...

Edward Berry: She definitely kneads dough.

Catherine Moran: A large amount of dough. Yes.

Edward Berry: The next stop is our bakery. In today's world, too few people are actually baking. You may walk into a supermarket and they'll say, "We bake our own bread". But I challenge whether they're actually... I've got to be careful what I say, but I challenge that they're scratch baking. Scratch baking means flour, water, yeast, salt. We bake seven days a week here. Hazel is our head baker and she's highly gifted baker, she's got a real touch. She and Hugh, who's her number two, are very innovative. They like to introduce new breads. We obviously have to carry traditional breads. I think probably our sourdough is something that we're particularly proud of but we're also not only baking bread here, we're making cookies, we're making cakes, Christmas puddings, mince pies. This is a busy, busy, little place.

Catherine Moran: And I spot you've got fresh cream cakes there, in the deli counter, which will be coming from the bakery?

Edward Berry: This is new for us. We didn't have a chill counter so we hadn't been able to use fresh cream. And it's been very popular.

Catherine Moran: I always think it's a good sign having fresh cream cakes in an institution because they're not the easiest things in terms of, perishability and also the technique of making them, I think it's just a great sign.

Edward Berry: Yes, as a business, you've probably identified one of the biggest challenges we face, which is that food has a short shelf life. If I take The Bakery, for example. It's an interesting question as to whether you adopt the French Bakery idea,

which is if you walked into a French baker at half past one and said "I want bread", he'd look at you like you're an idiot.

Catherine Moran: All sold out?

Edward Berry: Completely sold out, of course. Whereas, we need to have bread. We're open seven days a week. We're open 'til quite late on a Thursday and Friday. What's the perfect solution? Is it that I have lots and lots of bread left at the end that we end up throwing away? We don't throw food away, in fact. There's always some happy people to take it off our hands.

Or do you whittle it down so you've got a few loaves at the end and that's difficult to control. One of the great difficulties of business is controlling waste and we're very conscious of that and we don't want to waste anything if we can possibly avoid it.

Catherine Moran: Would you describe very briefly the selection of breads that we can see there in front of us?

Edward Berry: We probably make 30 different breads. Some of them very traditional: malted and wholemeal and the cottage loaves. Then we've added some of our specialty bread, Ludlow Blue, which has blue cheese and also has some pear in it. We do a fougasse which is a Provencal bread, which has onion and anchovy, which is maybe not a traditional recipe but something that we like and we've been making it now for a couple of years.

We have our sourdough, which I mentioned. We have breads with olives, we have bloomers. We do the tiger loaf which is quite popular which is a traditional white sponge but you sort of coat it with flour and you create a little crust. It's more of the visual than necessarily the flavour.

Catherine Moran: Yeah. Absolutely wonderful.

Edward Berry: Then scones.

Catherine Moran: Scones, tarts...

Edward Berry: Focaccia, which is obviously very popular, which we do with feta and red onion. Here you can see our small Christmas display. Christmas cakes, Christmas puddings, minced pies. Christmas has arrived.

Catherine Moran: Indeed. Yes. You've put on a very nice display.

Edward Berry: You can edit that. If this is going out in July.

Catherine Moran: No, not at all.

Edward Berry: If you look in here you'll see... that's Brenda and she's been here for many years. Her daughter, Anna, used to be our head baker. Anna's moved on, so Hazel's there. You'll see Kay, you'll see Hugh. I think you can see pretty clearly what they're doing. I see minced pies.

Catherine Moran: Minced pies happening and...

Edward Berry: Hugh actually making one of these red cakes, red velvet.

Catherine Moran: Oh yes. The red velvet. Yes.

Edward Berry: Which effectively, it's coloured... sort of white chocolate cake with colouring but it's proved to be very popular.

Catherine Moran: What do you call them? Big bins of flour underneath the work station there?

Edward Berry: Big bins. You've probably got it...big bins of flour!

Catherine Moran: Lots of different types of flour.

Edward Berry: They start work at three in the morning and then we have a second shift that runs through 'til three in the afternoon. The morning is very much focused on bread, getting everything so that when we open at 9 o' clock we have a completely full counter.

Catherine Moran: Wonderful.

Edward Berry: The last section is our jams and pickles. I'm going to suggest that we actually go inside.

Catherine Moran: Oh, wonderful.

Edward Berry: The glass is still up but if we go inside we'll see things being made.

Catherine Moran: That would be wonderful, yes. What is your most popular jam?

Edward Berry: Probably traditional strawberry. Our traditional most popular pickle is what we call onion confit.

We're now going into our Jams and Pickles room and depending on what's going on the aroma will give you an indication. On a good day, there'll be a lovely sweet smell of strawberries. At the moment, Darren's going to come and tell us a little bit of what you're doing at the moment, if you can.

Catherine Moran: Hello, Darren.

Edward Berry: This is Darren Marsh who's in charge of this department... makes all our jams and pickles. Just remind me, how many jams and pickles are we making at the moment?

Darren Marsh: Around 30 or 40 different ones, all in different sizes.

Edward Berry: What do you think is our most popular?

Darren Marsh: The marmalades. Marmalades are the most popular and also the sweet onion balsamic chutney. That's a really good one as well.

Edward Berry: What are you making at the moment?

Darren Marsh: Today we're making Bengal Chutney, which is apple-based. It's good with cheeses, curries, that sort of thing. All the apples are still... good time of the year to buy that.

Catherine Moran: Presume you're using local apples for this particular pot?

Darren Marsh: We've got some from Lady Windsor's garden that we're using today with some British one that we've... Because she couldn't supply all of them so... All local.

Catherine Moran: Smells quite intoxicating in here, isn't it. It's quite heady.

Darren Marsh: Yeah. We'll smell a bit when we go home. [Laughs]

Catherine Moran: I'm sure you will! Thank you very much Darren for having a word.

Darren Marsh: Thank you.

Catherine Moran: That's great. See you again. Take care. Lovely thank you. Thank you, Edward. Yes? You were going to say something?

Edward Berry: Where do you want to go now?

Catherine Moran: We've seen everything, haven't we?

Edward Berry: That really is what this place is all about. People making food, which we sell. That really is what makes this place exciting. Running a shop isn't the thing that motivates me here. My happiest days are when John or Dudley, our cheese maker, comes up with a new idea and we have a chat about food. Yes, it's a business too, one has to deal with all the other bits, but that's what motivates me and what I get excited about and what gives me great pride. Actually, it's quite useful once in a while, to do what we've done, because it just gives you that nice little moment when I go... It gives me the smile and reminds me that this is a very special place. I challenge as to whether other people have even been quite as brave.

We know there are many *excellent, excellent* farm retailers who have butchery counters and bakery but to do as much as we do, here on site, I think is... I'm hesitant to use the word "unique", but I've yet to find... and I've visited many farm-shops, and I love farm-shops and I think they're really very special and you get a feeling off them that because of what they are, they've been started by farmers, you get a strong sense of family and commitment. I try and introduce that here, but I think these are really, special, special places.

Catherine Moran: It reminds me of one of the very first comments you made about your food philosophy... about it being authentic. I guess this is really the very definition of authenticity, just what we've seen for the last few minutes. Fabulous. Congratulations.

Edward Berry: Well it's up to the team that do it that make it work.

Catherine Moran: Should we finish our conversation that we were having before we came down on the shop floor and I'll pick your brains a little bit more about buying and producing food? That would be great.

Edward Berry: Let's go back.

Catherine Moran: Okie dokey, thank you.

Thank you, again, to Edward for coming on the show. I hope you enjoyed that virtual tour of the Ludlow Food Centre. Edward's website is www.theflyingfork.co.uk.

You can follow the Ludlow Food Centre at @LudlowFoodCentr and their website is ludlowfoodcentre.co.uk.

All links mentioned in the show are available on my website, which is myartisanbusiness.com. You can download a free transcript of the show there.

To get updates on when I publish new episodes of the show, subscribe to my email list at myartisanbusiness.com and I'll let you know when new episodes are live.

If you're enjoying the show, would you please leave me a review on iTunes? I'd appreciate that very much and of course I'd welcome your feedback. Thank you.

Don't forget to tune into the second instalment of my conversation with Edward Berry, when Edward has his food and drink buying hat on. And that's going to be the next episode of the show.

That's all for now. You can find me on Twitter as @FoodDrinkShow so please do get in touch if you have any comments or questions.

Until next time, I'm Catherine Moran, happy cooking, happy brewing, happy fermenting, and thank you for listening.

Links Mentioned in the Show

- Edward Berry on [LinkedIn](#)
- www.theflyingfork.co.uk
- [The Ludlow Food Centre](#)
- [Moët & Chandon](#)
- [Claridges](#)
- [The Savoy](#)
- [Justerini & Brooks](#)
- [John Harvey & Sons \(producer of Harvey's Bristol Cream\)](#)
- [Krug](#)
- [Cape Mentelle](#)
- [Cloudy Bay](#)
- [Ashmore Kentish Cheese](#)
- [Armadillo Coffee Co](#)
- [Newby Teas](#)
- [The Clive Hotel and Restaurant](#)
- [Chilton Damson Gin](#)
- [William's Gin](#)
- [Tyrrell's Crisps](#)
- [Ludlow Vineyard and Distillery](#)
- [The Ludlow Kitchen](#)

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Episode #015 features Tom Hunt, the then Marketing Manager of The Ludlow Food Centre. You can listen to this episode, which is about marketing this multimillion-pound business, here: <http://myartisanbusiness.com/podcast/tom-hunt-marketing-the-ludlow-food-centre-a-multimillion-pound-food-and-drink-business-1-2/>

Episode #016 features Tom Hunt again, this time talking about food and drink packaging, copy and PR. Listen to this episode here: <http://myartisanbusiness.com/podcast/tom-hunt-marketing-the-ludlow-food-centre-a-multimillion-pound-food-and-drink-business-1-2/>

Episode #013 features Ludlow Vineyard and Distillery, one of the artisan companies mentioned by Edward on the show. Episode #013 has tips for growing an artisan drinks' business and you can listen to it here: <http://myartisanbusiness.com/podcast/ludlow-vineyard-and-distillery-tips-for-growing-a-successful-artisan-drinks-business-2/>

Episode #012 features Ludlow Vineyard and Distillery again. This episode, which will give you good insights on the number of products you should have in your range, is here: <http://myartisanbusiness.com/podcast/ludlow-vineyard-and-distillery-1-how-many-products-should-you-have-in-your-range-2>

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