

Romsey Wine Press



Romsey Wine & Dine



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Please pass on to friends, family and colleagues

8th September 2025

Bonjour

We have just been through "The Silly Season" when the politicians have been away and there is little in the way of big news stories. Even during the period, things do not stop. The stories about food and drink have, during the past two months been... more of went before, significant but largely ignored, bizarre or simply weird. We shall bring you a flavour of these, as well as news of the October Supper Club and our usual feature.

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Paul Dawkins

Dr Paul Dawkins

Chef d'Équipe
Romsey Wine & Dine

Next event

RWAD Supper Club Menu

Palmerston Rooms hearty fish soup
with crusty bread

Spanish beef casserole
Orzo and mixed green vegetables

Twice-baked stilton soufflé
Walnut oat biscuit

Coffee & tea

RWAD
Supper Club



October Supper Club

The next Supper Club will be on 10th October.

We are delighted to announce that we are offering an eclectic menu with three delicious dishes and three eclectic wines. Opening with a hearty fish

soup, we move on to a delicious Spanish beef casserole and end with a stilton soufflé.

We have scheduled the supper for Friday 10th October. If it proves as popular as we hope it will be, we are keeping an option open to run it again on Saturday 11th October.

- Three courses + Coffee
- Three wines
- Start 7:30 pm
- End approx 10:00 pm
- The Palmerston Rooms, Palmerston Street, Romsey
- Friday 10th October 2025 & *possibly* Saturday 11th October 2025
- Tickets £50 prix compris
- Places limited

Booking

Please book for Friday 11th October but indicate whether or not you could do the Saturday. If you cannot attend on the Friday, please indicate if you would be interested in attending on the Saturday

Please book by: Sunday 5th October.

To book:

email: supper@romseywineanddine.co.uk

Tel: 01794 278634
07802 210481

Raise a glass of wine

The Glass Tax, Packaging Levy or ERP

Here is another new tax that has crept out of the woodwork. It is referred to by three different names:

- The Glass Tax
- The packaging levy
- The Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) scheme

The UK's new (often called a "glass tax") is an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) scheme that makes producers pay for the disposal of their packaging, with glass incurring the highest costs due to its weight. The media like to focus on the impact on the drinks industry (well, that is to be expected) but it also affects produce such as jam, coffee and (close to my heart) honey.

The cost to consumers will be around 9p for a bottle of wine, 4p for a 330ml beer bottle, and 11p for a bottle of spirits. This new tax aims to encourage producers to use more environmentally friendly but, some would say, inappropriate materials.

The Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) scheme

This policy shifts the cost of household waste recycling from local authorities to the businesses that produce packaging.

The levy is calculated based on the weight of the packaging, which makes glass more expensive to tax compared to lighter materials like plastic and aluminium.

There is a great deal of speculation about the consequences including:

- Moves towards less sustainable forms of packaging
- Increases in the cost of living
- Brewers giving up producing bottled beer
- Wine being sold in bags

Here is my key question: If the cost of waste recycling is shifted from local authorities to businesses that produce packaging, does it mean that council tax and business rates will come down?

One final point, who brought in the tax? Not Rachel-from-accounts but Mrs May!



Food stuff



Why is fish so expensive in the UK?

Could it be because the Brexit reset deal done by Sir Keir Starmer risks handing Brussels up to £6bn of British fish? That is official data.

In February, three months before the agreement was struck, officials from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) gave ministers their analysis of the “economic benefits and concerns of re-negotiating fisheries policies with the EU”.

Their report states that the EU took £400m to £500m of fish from UK waters in 2023. This suggests that by extending EU access for another 12 years Sir Keir has signed away up to £6bn worth of British fish.

The argument is over numbers. The Government rejected Defra’s (their own) estimate, insisting it did not make sense to project the figure from 2023 on to future years because of potential variations in quotas and market prices.

While Sir Keir guaranteed the EU access to British waters until 2038, the UK retains the right to negotiate the amount of fish that Brussels can land each year. That means it is not possible to predict how much EU boats will take from UK waters on an annual basis, making the £6bn figure a rough projection.

Some argue that the amount is far greater than the £6bn because there are the lost jobs in fishing, supporting fishing boats and food processing, as well as the lost tax revenues.

Morsels

Tomato porn

Did you miss this again?

La Tomatina is a Spanish festival in Buñol, Spain where participants throw tomatoes at each other. It is said to be the biggest food fight in the world. From the festival's origin as a food fight between friends in the 1940s, it has become a famous tourist attraction. Until 2013 there was no limit to the number of participants; in 2013 the festival became a ticketed event for no more than 20,000, so as not to overwhelm Buñol's population of about 9,000 people.

It has got to be better than being chased by bulls.

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Cod evolve to avoid being caught in nets

Researchers have found that cod in the overfished Baltic Sea have evolved to become smaller so that they do not get caught in nets.

The EU banned the fishing of eastern Baltic cod in 2019 following years of overfishing. However, scientists warned its population may never fully recover.

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Salmonella surges as people turn off fridge to save cash

This is a real silly season story.

Turning off the fridge and eating out-of-date meals to save money may be driving record cases of food poisoning.

More than 10,000 people tested positive for salmonella in 2024, official data show, which is up 17 per cent from 2023 and the highest annual total since at least 2007.

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Big supermarkets sell too much foreign meat

Trade deals with Australia and New Zealand start to undercut price of British produce in supermarkets.

Supermarkets are accused of failing to back British farmers after trade deals triggered a surge in meat imports from Australia and New Zealand.

Livestock farmers said the “big four” retailers were putting them at a disadvantage by selling imported beef and lamb alongside British produce at a time when the domestic agriculture industry was struggling.

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Minister’s drive to tackle obesity branded ‘nanny state’

Supermarkets will be ordered to cut up to 100 calories from the average shopping basket under a new “nanny state” drive to tackle obesity.

Ministers are set to impose a “healthy food standard” that will force stores to curtail sales of sugary and salty snacks in favour of more fruit and vegetables.

Shops that fail to meet the mandatory targets could face fines, which retail sources have warned could see prices rise.

There is an interesting implication of this story. If lots of people like me go into a supermarket and buy sweet things, the **supermarket** gets fined – not the customers. The government must believe that the supermarkets can control what we buy. Think about that!

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A man in Spain sets fire to a café after being told he cannot have mayonnaise in his sandwich

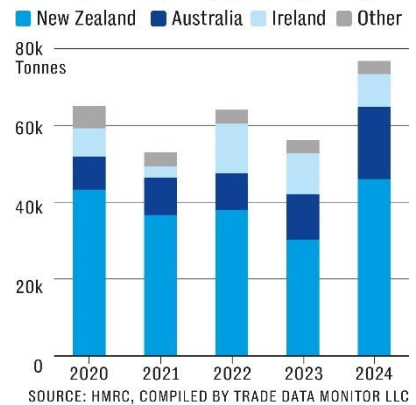
A disgruntled customer set fire to a cafe in Spain after he was told staff could not offer him mayonnaise in his sandwich. The alleged arsonist left the cafe and walked to a nearby petrol station after reportedly being told “no” twice by members of staff.

While there, he bought a litre-and-a-half of petrol before returning to set the cafe on fire causing thousands of pounds of damage.

It must be frustrating to be told that you cannot have mayonnaise in your sandwich, but think how much worse it would be to ask for mayonnaise and to find that you have been served Hellmann’s so-called “mayonnaise”. Incidentally, why, if it is real, do they need to put “real” on the label?

Britain lamb imports

UK sheep meat imports, by country of origin



Gastro-quote



“Fine cooking is when the things you have cooked taste as they are.”

Curnonsky: The Prince of Gastronomes

Plank of the month

Awarded for the worst contribution to the wine and food industry reported this month.

The winner is....

Peter Kyle, the Science and Technology Secretary

For launching government-run and tax-payer funded diners which will resemble the subsidised civic kitchens of the 1940s.

Recipe & menu

Sardines aux épinards

This is a delightful sardine recipe from France. The spinach and fish go so well together. It can be served as a starter or as a light supper dish.

Preparation Time: 15 Mins

Cooking Time: 20 Mins

Total Time: 35 Mins

Ingredients

For 2 servings...

450 gms	Spinach
	Salt
½ tsp	Milk
6	Sardines - scaled and cleaned
10 gms	Breadcrumbs - fresh white
30 ml	Olive oil



Method

Wash the spinach well and wilt in a saucepan. Drain, chop and season the spinach with salt. Mix in the milk and spread over the bottom of a buttered ovenproof dish.

Heat an oven to 180°C.

Wash and dry the sardine and then arrange them on the spinach. Sprinkle with breadcrumbs, a pinch of salt and the olive oil. Bake them until browned (about 15 minutes) in the oven.

Wine recommendations

A dry white wine.

Conventional

Côtes de Provence blanc

Interesting

Côtes de Gascogne blanc

Entre-deux-Mers

Jurançon sec

Vin de pays Charentais blanc

Here is a menu suggestion for dinner:

The season of mellow fruitfulness

A menu for the autumn

Black pudding and goats' cheese salad

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Partridge with chorizo

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Syllabub and cherries

These recipes can be found at: http://www.romseywineanddine.co.uk/Recipes_Top.htm or in Bistrot Cookery - Cooking Bistrot Food at Home by Paul Dawkins

Future events

Future events

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