Simon Howie Brand New in Auchterarder



Simon Howie butchers shop in Perth is well known for its high profile winners in Meat Skills competitions and of course the *Meat Trades Journal's* UK Butcher Shop of the Year Award in 2006. To some however it may be news that Simon Howie Butchers have two retail outlets but to the good folk of Auchterarder it is a prized asset and they are not at all surprised that their local shop is a finalist in this year's Butchers Shop of the Year competition.









The Auchterarder premises underwent a major refit in May 2008 both internally and externally and every day still looks just as pristine as it did immediately after the shop re-opened. The image is now very slick with an s-shaped counter with separation for cooked meats, raw meats, speciality sausages, hot pastry products and chef prepared poultry. In addition there is a self service refrigeration section for freshly prepared ready meals and pies / pastries.

As part of a company wide brand development program, refurbishment over the past twelve months in both shops has been with the objectives of:

- Increasing brand awareness in terms of look and consistency and also in terms of language.
- Creating a brand personality that engages with the target audience.
- Designing and merchandising the shops to be appealing and to reflect the Simon Howie brand.
- To give the shops and brand distinctiveness and individuality.
- To accentuate the shops point of difference.

The Auchterarder shop underwent the greater transformation and pleasingly since the refurbishment took place, it has increased the turnover over a 3 month period (May to July 08) compared with the same period last year showing an impressive increase of 30%.

The Simon Howie brand is enforced with suspended signage from ceiling and in window that incorporated seasonal products, offers and events, while a bespoke display stand was designed to hold the shops selection of marinades, chutneys and jams.

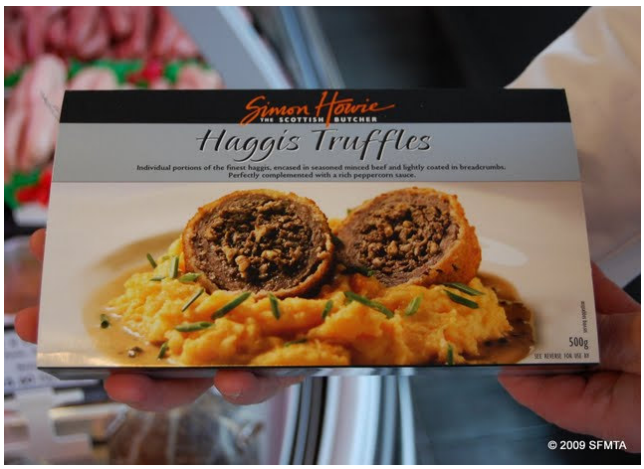


A new "Ready to Eat, Heat and Cook" concept was introduced, which splits the product offering into specific categories aiming to clearly communicate key product attributes and easily choose products to suit specific meal occasions. The "Ready to Cook" range consists of products such as Greek Style Lamb, Beef Olives and Chicken Kiev and is aimed at customers who want to feel they are participating in the cooking process, but are short of the time to cook a meal from scratch.

A self serve counter was incorporated into the shops design, allowing customers to choose from a vast variety of ready prepared meals or pastry products. All of the meals are prepared from Simon Howie Butchers very own award winning chef and offer customers the quality of a home cooked meal with the convenience of being able to re-heat quickly and easily. This range is merchandised under the "Ready to Heat" category.

The Auchterarder shop hosts a hot unit, allowing customers to purchase a selection of pastry products which are hot and ready to eat. The "Ready to Eat" range also includes cheese and stuffed olives selected from all over Europe.





Simon Howie Butchers pride themselves in new product development and continually strive to provide customers with something innovative in our product offer. Six times they have been finalists in the Scottish Food and Drink Excellence Awards for product innovation.

All this is much easier to deliver of course when you have the resources of a factory unit in nearby Dunning where 75 people are employed making manufactured, cooked products and ready meals in premises that have a grade A BRC certificate throughout. This also means that the staff in the shops can devote all their attentions to selling and satisfying customers. In Auchterarder 5 full time and three part time members of staff look after their customers needs.

The level of staff retention is the foundation for building trusting and lasting relationships with customers. Simon Howie butchers have a very low turnover of staff and have a team of skilled and motivated individuals, who are the major reasons for success with retail expertise as well as butchery skills.

They continue to reinvest in staff training and competition involvement to allow their staff to grow within the industry and gain recognition for all their efforts.

There is a set selection of our most popular products permanently on offer, which allows our customers to know that they can have three for the price of two all year round. The assurance of a deal on some of their customers favourite purchases continually brings people through the door, but also allows them to give something back to the customer. The need to provide great value as well as quality is fully understood in the Howie marketing.

Howies will find out on Tuesday 17th November just how they fair in the Butchers Shop of the Year awards but they have to be major contenders not just for the Scottish title but for the UK prize too.

More pictures at
http://picasaweb.google.co.uk/SFMTA1/SIMONHOWIEAUCHTERARDER







