



Since it opened in 1986 Pret A Manger has become the UK's leading independent retailer of premium sandwiches. Operating like a restaurant, all sandwiches, wraps, baguettes and salads are made from scratch on the day, avoiding the addition of chemicals, additives and preservatives. Pret is committed to sourcing natural ingredients and is unwilling to compromise on freshness or quality.



Each shop (bar a few of the smaller) runs its own kitchen. 'Sell by' dates are redundant as sandwiches and salads are prepared fresh, with any unsold at the end of the day going to homeless charities and shelters rather than being kept over to the following day. Since its inception the brand ethos has been, and remains, to create simple, delicious, confident flavours from natural source ingredients.

In 2010 Pret launched its Toasties. Using the same good, natural ingredients that are used in its sandwiches, wraps and baguettes, the Pret Toastie is made fresh in each shop's kitchen and is toasted in just one minute.

Market

Despite the recent recession the UK sandwich industry remains robust. Overall, the market has increased by 3.6 per cent in the last year to reach a value of more than £6 billion, with volume sales up four per cent (Source: The British Sandwich Association 2010). Pret performs well ahead of the market. While Pret A Manger continues to adapt to cater for changes in consumer demands and shifts in the market, its trademark 'formula' remains consistent.

As a private company Pret A Manger is able to set its own agenda for development; unlike many of its public company competitors it is not under pressure to expand too quickly. Currently it has 260 shops, 220 of which are in the UK, turning over in excess of £300 million per year.

Product

Since its launch Pret A Manger has revolutionised the sandwich market through the company's founding principle: serving freshly prepared good, natural food.

Achievements

Pret A Manger's longstanding association with homeless charities is an integral part of the company ethos, and part of this has been its long-established tradition of donating money raised from sales of Christmas sandwiches. In 2010 the company went further, donating 5p from every sandwich and bloomer sold from the beginning of November to the end of December, whether it was a Classic Christmas Lunch, a Beech-Smoked BLT or a SlimPret. The money raised provided hot meals and Christmas dinners for homeless shelters, hostels and soup kitchens across the UK.



In 2010 Pret was awarded the London Mayor's Green500 Platinum Award for carbon reduction, underlining the importance it places on sourcing good local food and reducing rather than offsetting carbon. It's also leading the way in its commitment to the Food Standards Agency's trial of placing calorie counts next to products on shelves, menus and tills. Pret A Manger now displays calories and saturated fat content next to all its food products.

Recent Developments

Pret A Manger recently became the first UK high street cafe brand to switch to using a 100 per cent Higher Welfare British chicken, a move applauded by animal protection charities and key organisations. Indeed, Compassion in World Farming presented Pret with the 2010 Good Chicken Award. The Suffolk-reared chickens enjoy 20 per cent more space than

the current industry standard and meet RSPCA recommendations for stocking density.

A further company initiative is the launch of The Simon Hargraves Apprenticeship scheme, which offers three-month working placements to those often marginalised from conventional ways into employment – for instance, people with no fixed address or with prior criminal convictions. The scheme has taken on 14 apprentices to date, 75 per cent of whom have graduated to permanent employees.

Pret's ongoing commitment to avoiding landfill has seen it establish a 'back of house' recycling scheme and it recently launched organic waste collections for composting from its kitchens. In 2009 it reduced the number of plastic bags it used by 28 per cent simply by asking customers if they wanted one. A further 32 sustainability projects are underway, including paperless banking.

Promotion

Pret A Manger's philosophy is to communicate with its customers without the aid of traditional marketing teams. It doesn't use mass media and direct marketing, instead focusing on investing in its staff and the quality of its food, and in channels that allow for quality engagement with customers; a recent focus on online and social media being an example of this. Furthermore, the shops and packaging are used as channels through which the brand – known for its use of humorous and quirky images of food – is promoted.

Brand Values

Pret A Manger's success relies on staff pride in their work, a culture fostered from within. The egalitarian hands-on approach filters down from the CEO to shop assistants and emphasises the importance Pret A Manger places on training and retaining good staff. The brand personality is underpinned by its core values: passion for food, enthusiasm, integrity, honesty and belief in its convictions, with an uncompromising stance on quality and commitment to innovation.

Things you didn't know about Pret A Manger

Pret A Manger was the first retailer to move from plastic sandwich boxes to cardboard back in the 1990s.

In 2010 The Pret Charity Run donated 1.7 million sandwiches to more than 100 homeless charities and shelters.

Pret uses only Higher Welfare chicken sourced from the UK and free-range UK eggs – which are used in all products including muffins, cakes and sauces.

In 2010, Pret customers consumed 92 tonnes of chocolate powder – which is sprinkled on every Pret Cappuccino.

1986	2001	2003	2004	2008	2010
Pret A Manger is founded by entrepreneurs Julian Metcalfe and Sinclair Beecham. The first shop serves more than 7,000 customers per week in its first year.	The McDonald's Corporation buys a minority stake in Pret A Manger, although it has no direct influence over what is sold, or how.	Soup, salad, sushi and hot drinks exceed 35 per cent of sales as Pret adjusts to changing eating habits.	The Pret DIY campaign is launched, in which Pret publishes its sandwich recipes for customers to try at home, and the brand introduces its quirky food images for the first time.	Bridgepoint, a European private equity firm, acquires a majority share in Pret, bringing an end to its relationship with McDonald's.	Pret celebrates its international expansion with a total of 260 shops in the UK, New York and Hong Kong, with recent openings in both Chicago and Washington.

