

New artisan bakery in Edinburgh

A former telecoms manager who re-trained as baker when he was made redundant twelve months ago, is opening a new artisan bakery in Edinburgh this week.

Jon Wood (43) spent the last 20 years working in marketing and product management, latterly for a telecoms company, but faced with redundancy early last year, he decided to turn his baking hobby into a new career as an artisan baker.

Specialising in handshaped breads, continental breads and homebakes using only natural ingredients, Bakery Andante in Morningside Road will open for business on Wednesday and will also feature an open bakehouse, where customers can see the bakery produce being prepared by Jon Wood himself.

Mr Wood who lives in Colinton, says his passion for baking started more than ten years ago. "I started with making my own bread at the weekends and experimenting with loads of recipes and mastering different techniques. Within a short time, I was turning out a variety of loaves and pastries for friends, family and school fetes on a fairly frequent basis. "

"While it came as a disappointment at the time, being made redundant also presented an opportunity to do something different with my life. So, I took the opportunity to follow a dream and start my own business.

"Turning a weekend hobby into a full-time bakery business has been a big learning curve but I have been very fortunate to receive excellent advice and support from bakers in and around Edinburgh who have been very kind and let me spend time at their premises. The Scottish Bakers association also allowed me to use their test bakery so that I could apply what I had learned in a commercial bakery environment, under the expert

guidance and support of their superb trainers. All of this has proved invaluable in giving me the confidence to take the plunge and open my own premises.”

Wood says Bakery Andante will specialise in breads which use ‘slow baking methods’ and as few ingredients as possible. “Some of my breads will take five hours to mature because I won’t be using additives and improvers and fast mix methods which speed up the baking process, but severely compromise the taste and quality of the bread. As a consequence you don’t have to use as many ingredients and therefore you can taste and savour the taste because the sweetness and flavours in the wheat have had the opportunity to develop. ”

He added, “I believe there is nothing that can beat the taste of real artisan bakery and I would like to think that, in time, I will be able to convert many others to this way of eating.”

Alan Clarke, chief executive of Scottish Bakers said, “It is heartening to see new start-up businesses’ opening within the craft bakery sector, the landscape of the sector has changed in recent years with the expansion of out of town shopping centres and the ever larger supermarkets. This gives customers the opportunity to support Scottish businesses that make Scottish products in their own locality.”

He added, “Scottish Bakers as the representative organisation of the sector will continue to provide support to new business start-ups and existing businesses to enable them to promote and develop the high quality craft skills that create wonderful quality products that many Scottish customers are seeking.”