

JERSEY COUNTRY LIFE MAGAZINE

RURAL

ISSUE #28 - AUTUMN 2019

From Jersey Flour to Jersey Bread

Local bread from local
flour for local people

Food for Thought

Join India Hamilton and
RURAL magazine for a
very special meal

The Landscapes of Rural Jersey

A new art competition
is born



From Jersey to Jersey FLOUR BREAD



‘Think twice, buy local’ – it has become a popular slogan. For a long time it has been difficult if not impossible, to make Jersey bread from Jersey-grown flour. The times they are a-changing – as *Chloë Bowler* reports

As we move into the Autumn months, many people will start to pack away their barbeques and return to their kitchens, as thoughts turn to creating more warming meals and baking delicious-smelling goodies.

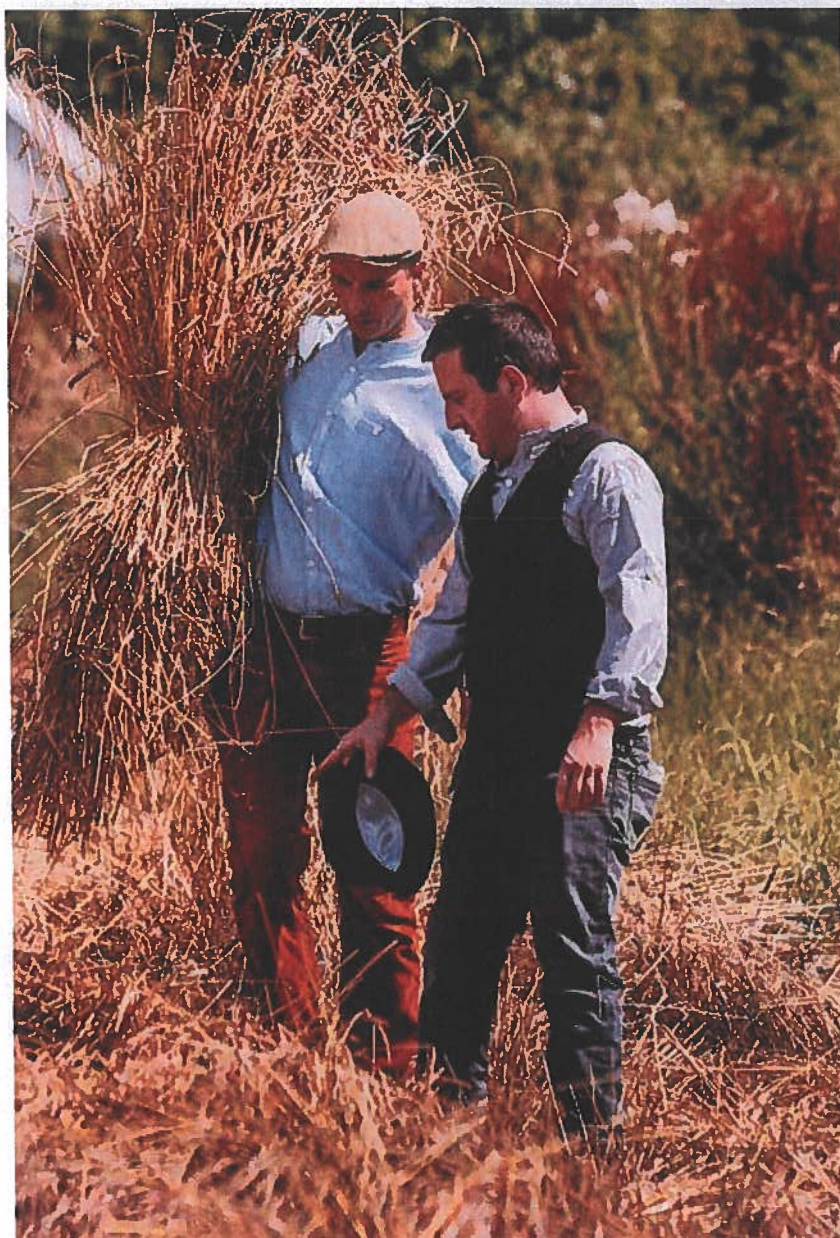
Jersey offers such an array of seasonal culinary produce. It is already well known for its shellfish, potatoes and much more; a good deal of which is locally produced and internationally

appreciated. One thing that may not be as widely known is the milling of flour in Jersey. Flour is the ingredient at the very heart of baking. Centuries ago, wheat imported from Europe was milled in Jersey and exported internationally. In fact, milling was a thriving business for many, many years.

The earliest records of flour milling in Jersey date back to the early 1300s. At this point in time, all mills on the Island

were controlled either by the Crown or a Seigneur. In the 1340s there were 30 mills in operation on the island, and due to the increasing popularity of flour as an export product, by the mid-19th century the number of local mills had increased to 46. This flour was being exported as far afield as North America and Canada, and business boomed.

One such mill - today the only remaining, fully working water mill in

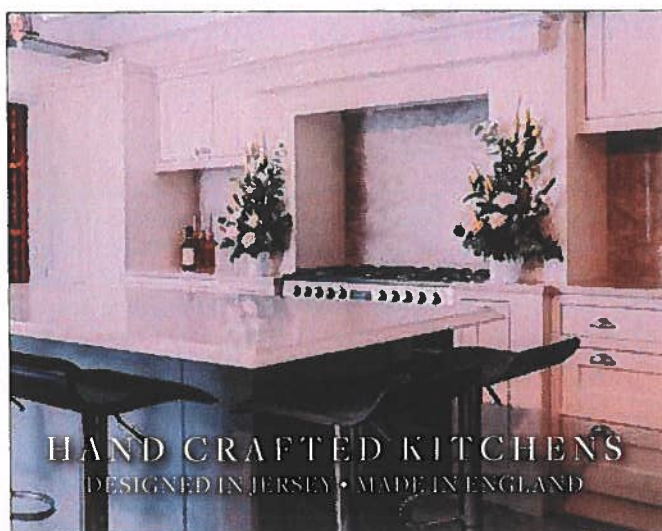


the Island - is Le Moulin de Quétivel, in St Peter's Valley. This mill changed ownership and was rebuilt many times throughout the centuries, and indeed continued to operate as a business until the 20th Century. However, this was during the time of transition from water power to steam power, and although the mill was briefly brought back into operation during the German Occupation, after the war potatoes and tomatoes became the main produce of the Island. Subsequently, the mill, having been closed for a number of years, fell into disrepair, and unfortunately burnt down in 1969. At this time the National Trust was in the process of negotiating a long lease from Jersey Water in order to restore the mill.

Thankfully, despite this immense set back, the National Trust began the huge task of restoring the mill during the 1970s. This was achieved; and the mill was finally returned to full, working order in 1979, with the National Trust earning an Award from the Civic Trust for their work.

The National Trust have done an amazing job with Le Moulin de Quétivel. Not only have they renovated it to working order, but also offer visitors an entire experience; giving a real insight into the mill as a building, its history, and the milling process from start to finish. The two-storey building hosts a film and displays depicting the history of the mill, in addition to serving refreshments on the ground floor.

During summer months, the mill is open to the public two days per week, and



Our Jersey showroom is now open.

Showcasing our collection of kitchens and furniture, handmade in the UK. We deliver bespoke craftsmanship and a personalised service from planning, through to fitting.

Our new showroom is situated at Holme Grown, La Rue Au Long, Grouville.



Michael Peterson

Tel: 07797741226

michaelp@handcraftedkitchensdirect.com
handcraftedkitchensdirect.com



twice a year, the National Trust opens Le Quétivel for an Open Milling Day, where you can watch the water travelling downhill from the mill pond along the ancient leat to the mill wheel, witness the huge mill stones in operation, and finally see some Jersey flour being milled - from Jersey wheat.

During these open days there are experts on hand to guide you through the journey from wheat to flour, and to explain how the machinery operates, and the importance of the mill in Jersey's history of agriculture and industry. You can enjoy a woodland walk, a herb garden, and there is even a new cycle path linking the mill with St Helier.

The Jersey wheat milled at Le Quétivel is no longer imported, but is farmed traditionally by the Le Maistre family at Le Tacheron Farm in Trinity. The Le Maistre family have a long history in the Island and a passion for traditional farming methods, and are intent on preserving the farming heritage of Jersey.

Coming from long-standing farming stock, the three brothers decided that they wanted to keep the old traditions alive, not purely for sentimental reasons, but also because they want to reduce their carbon footprint and encourage wildlife to flourish. By not using modern, heavy machinery, they are able to minimise soil compaction, and protect the natural habitats of many animals.

The Le Tacheron fields are also bordered by a beautiful array of cornfield annuals, creating a natural border to protect the crops and house a host of insects and wildlife. Some of these borders have been lost over the years in mainstream farming, largely due to the intensification of cultivation and the use of chemicals, which has made some of these species of flowers extremely rare. If allowed to, these plants will naturally grow alongside crops, and include some added colour from cornflowers and corn marigolds. They are also a wonderful reminder of how wheat fields looked just less than a century ago.

The Le Maistre family grow heritage varieties of spelt, wheat and barley. No chemicals are used, and they harvest and thresh the grains with vintage equipment, helped by their impressive and enormous Shire Horses, Ben and Ringo. Farming the old-fashioned way is a very physical job, with the wheat being harvested at just the right time, stacked by hand and loaded up on to trailers to be taken away. It is a beautiful sight, and one that is very fitting to the rural landscape of Jersey.

The cereals grown by Le Tacheron are some of the most ancient, heirloom grains ever cultivated. There are a variety of grains including Einkorn, which is the oldest cultivated grain known to scientists. This is a very pure grain, and has gained in popularity as people find it easier to digest than some of the modern, gluten-heavy grains around today.

Spelt is another of the earliest crops known to man, which was quickly overtaken in popularity by wheat.

“
The flour
produced at
Le Moulin de
Quétivel is a
dense, whole-
wheat flour,
making it perfect
for baking
wholemeal
breads.
”

However, it is experiencing something of a resurgence, due to its being a nutritional powerhouse, more so than wheat, as well as acknowledged claims of lowering cholesterol. The spelt, along with the other cereals cultivated here, are grown in their purest form. Modern, hybrid descendants have become much shorter, so it is incredible to see fields of six foot high wheat swaying in the breeze.

The wheat, which is lovingly grown and harvested at Le Tacheron, is taken to the National Trust's Le Moulin de Quétivel. As it would have been centuries ago, the wheat is then milled into flour, and packaged up. Visitors to the mill, can purchase packets of this flour thereby taking away their own piece of history.

The National Trust also holds masterclass sessions throughout the year where, using the flour, you are able not only to learn how to bake bread but so

much more. It is a great way to pick up tips, and acquire new skills in some wonderful surroundings.

There is a long tradition of bakeries in Jersey, with some still to be found in the Jersey Markets. Home baking has become increasingly popular, due in no small part to programmes such as the Great British Bake Off, and the surge from America of cupcakes and celebration cakes.

The flour produced at Le Moulin de Quétivel is a dense, whole-wheat flour, making it perfect for baking wholemeal breads. One of the most traditional is the Cabbage Loaf, which is usually a round loaf wrapped and baked in cabbage leaves. Although this may not spring to mind as something to cook bread with, the cabbage leaf provides a valuable source of moisture and protection from the intense heat of the oven.



Charles Le Maistre



This easy recipe uses flour supplied from Le Moulin de Quétivel, and cabbage leaves from Le Tacheron Farm.

Makes 1 Loaf:

500g Flour
50g Melted Butter or Margarine
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp Salt
1 tsp Sugar
1 Sachet of Instant Yeast
2 Cabbage Leaves

Method:

Sieve the flour into a large mixing bowl.

Stir in the butter, salt and sugar.

Mix in the yeast.

Knead well by machine or by hand for at least 10 minutes.

Mould into a round, loaf shape.

Cover the bowl with a damp cloth or cling film and place in a warm area (over an Aga or in a boiler room is ideal).

Leave to rise for at least 2 hours.

Brush a little melted butter or margarine on to the cabbage leaves so that they stick to the dough.

Place on a baking tray sandwiched between the two cabbage leaves.

Bake at 200C for 20-30 minutes until cooked through.

To test, turn the loaf upside down and knock the bottom. If it sounds hollow it is ready.



*For more information on Le Moulin de Quétivel please visit nationaltrust.je