

Home > Spears World > Food Friday

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- EDUCATION INDEX
- RISING STARS OF WEALTH MANAGEMENT INDEX
- UHNW WEALTH MANAGEMENT AND FAMILY OFFICE INDEX
- HNW WEALTH MANAGEMENT INDEX
- LEGAL INDEX
- ACCOUNTANCY INDEX
- PHILANTHROPY INDEX
- REPUTATION MANAGEMENT INDEX
- PROPERTY INDEX
- ART & COLLECTING INDEX
- INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL CENTRES INDEX
- SECURITY INDEX
- PRIVATE EQUITY INDEX
- BUSINESS ANGELS INDEX
- HOTELS INDEX

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## Food Friday

# George Hammer on what the food industry can learn from beauty business

Friday, 28th September 2012



George Hammer is a man of beauty, having brought Aveda, L'Occitane and The Sanctuary to the UK. He is also hospitable, owning One Mayfair, One Marylebone and new restaurant The GrEAT British on North Audley Street (opens late October). Here he answers questions on what one industry can teach the other

**GEORGE HAMMER IS** best known for his work in the beauty field, having brought well known brands Aveda, L'Occitane and The Sanctuary to the UK. He owns Hammer Holdings which owns, partners, distributes and represents a variety of brands including Daniel Sandler, Mister Mascara, Leighton Denny, Vicki Ullah and philanthropic brand 'all for eve'. Hammer Holdings also own the prestigious Urban Retreat which takes up residence on the top floor of Harrods in London and, at 22,000 square feet, is one of the largest salons in the world.

On the hospitality side he owns and runs the two popular event spaces One Mayfair and One Marylebone and together with Tony Zoccola, owner of East Dulwich Deli, they will launch The GrEAT British, a classic British restaurant on North Audley Street in late October. Press release attached.

### What can the food industry learn from the beauty industry?

I think that marketing a restaurant or product well is one of the main lessons that the food industry could learn. I feel that packaging, presentation and visual merchandising are very important in the beauty industry and the food industry could use elements of this for their own products. In beauty, we carefully plan out a marketing strategy for the whole year and this is another aspect that they could learn from. However I think the most valuable lesson is customer relationship management.

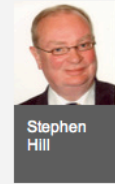
### And vice versa?

At Urban Retreat in Harrods we have found that the food offering is very important. We brought in East Dulwich Deli, owned by Tony and his wife Tracey Zoccola now my business partner for The GrEAT British, and found that we tripled our turnover as the ladies would stay for lunch after their treatments, or if they were having a longer treatment they would obviously need something to eat as you cannot live on cappuccinos for three hours!

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1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6

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**Q** My mother appointed my brother as her attorney under a property and financial affairs Lasting Power of Attorney three years ago. I live the other side of the country and am unable to visit regularly but I have recently discovered that the fees for my mother's care home have not been paid for some time. I am concerned that my brother is not fulfilling his responsibilities as attorney and may be using my mother's money to pay off his own debts. Is there anything I can do to find out what is happening and perhaps remove him from the role?

**A** Your brother would have had no authority to act until your mother's LPA was registered with the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG). It can be registered at any time after it has been made. Once registered, your brother has authority to make all decisions in relation to your mother's property and financial affairs both while she has capacity to make those decisions herself and when she does not (subject to any restrictions that your mother may have set out in the LPA and subject to a limitation on gifts)

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**Why is British food undergoing a revival?**


I think that the Jubilee and Olympics have had a great effect on British food and way it is judged worldwide. The French used to call us 'les rosbifs' but I was in France recently and they are now mad on crumble – a traditional British pudding. I think that British food is our best kept secret, for years people have been obsessed with Italian and French food.

However, I don't feel that many British restaurants have taken the plunge in serving only British produce, there is always a French wine on the list or an Italian cappuccino for coffee. At The GrEAT British we will only be serving British produce with an all British wine list.

**What changes do you foresee in the London dining scene?**

I think that restaurants only focusing on one dish will become more prominent – we can already see this with Chicken Shop and Bubbledogs. I also think that value for money and the experience itself will become more prevalent as people are moving away from complicated and over elaborate dishes. Pop ups are also still doing well.

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