

INTRODUCING TGR's Editors' Picks



They say imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.

This month, *The Gourmet Retailer* borrows an annual favorite from our sister publication, *Progressive Grocer*: Editors' Picks. Loyal readers of *PG* are familiar with this yearly salute to the best new products of the year as selected by the editorial staff.

To kick off *TGR*'s version, winners were selected by an exhaustive screening process that involved the entire staff of our Jersey City, N.J., office — the editorial staff of *PG* and *Convenience Store News*, and our non-editorial staff alike. Products were judged on three criteria: taste/functionality, innovation and value. To be eligible, products had to be introduced between March 2011 and June 2012.

We put out a call for entries, and we were overwhelmed by the response. Our inaugural competition attracted nearly 500 entries. Our tireless testers weren't deterred by the task at hand. They sampled and tested fearlessly and contributed their honest, unbiased feedback. Armed with our colleagues' tasting and testing notes, we were able to determine which products were worthy of recognition in *TGR*'s inaugural class of Editors' Picks. ▶



pleasing exterior, the machine also does the heavy lifting, making exceptional latte macchiato and countless other specialty coffee drinks. And it does it all without having to move the cup. Recipient of the International Housewares Association's Innovation Award in the Kitchen Electrics category and a winner of the 25th Annual Excellence in Design Competition, the J9 One Touch system is a stunner.

✔ KBC Kane Food Group Kane Kandy Chocolate Party Cups

SRP: \$7.99-\$9.99 (package of 6)
800-875-5557
www.nichegourmet.com

We picked it because: After testing Kane Kandy Chocolate Party Cups, we're now armed with a secret weapon that wows party guests every time. A quick and easy way to make pastry-shop-quality desserts at home or in the store, these convenient, high-quality party cups from Fort Lauderdale, Fla.-based Kane Food Group offer virtually endless options. One of our tasters used a pastry bag to pipe in mousse, and then topped the creation with chocolate sprinkles



1849 BRAND



When all natural was a way of life!

1849 Brand Sauces come from a time when all-natural wasn't a lifestyle choice but a way of life. These unique and delicious products from the Pioneer days are priced to move and made to please.

Thick & Rich BBQ Sauce	Campfire Sauce
Southern Style Salsa	Salsa Eldorado Chile Verde
Extra Cheesy Caesar Dressing	Tri-Tip Meat Marinade
Garlic & Basil Pasta Sauce	Artichoke Merlot Pasta Sauce
Roasted Red Pepper & Cabernet Pasta Sauce	

Golden West Specialty Foods, 300 Industrial Way, Brisbane CA 94005
(415) 637-0123 • (800) 584-4481 • Fax (415) 657-0110
sales@gwfoods.com • www.gwfoods.com

and fresh raspberries. Needless to say, it was a runaway hit.

✔ La Campofilone Elite Pasta

SRP: \$7.95
516-801-4688
www.povalleyfoods.com

We picked it because: We could feel the salty breeze rolling off the Adriatic Sea when we took our first bite of this authentic Italian pasta made from non-GMO durum wheat and free-range eggs. La Campofilone pasta, imported by Po Valley Foods in Locust Valley, N.Y., uses durum wheat semolina that's produced in a local mill in Le Marche in central Italy. Extracted from the heart of a single grain, this wheat gives La Campofilone pasta its toothsome texture. We also loved the gift-basket-worthy, recently revamped packaging made from trees of certified environmentally sound forestry.



✔ Italian Foods Corp. La Piana Almond Cake Mix

SRP: \$8.99
888-516-7262
www.italianfoods.com

We picked it because: We forgot this product was gluten-free the moment we tasted the dense and delicious cake that we so easily created using this mix from Raleigh, N.C.-based Italian Foods Corp. Based on the classic Italian torta di noci or nut cake, La Piana Almond Cake features a combination of nut flours in its mix that are right on the mark. Users simply add eggs, butter, water and baking powder. The result is a lightly sweet cake that isn't overly heavy, yet full of bright almond flavor.



✔ LeRoy's Ghost Pepper Aged Cheddar Gourmet Ketchup

SRP: \$4.99-\$5.99
800-776-6966
www.leroyketchup.com

We picked it because: Putting the quintessential American condiment to the test was no easy task. Our intrepid testers conducted a blind tasting of a whole host of ketchups, and the complex flavor and subtle heat of LeRoy's Ghost Pepper Aged Cheddar Gourmet Ketchup had the entire panel seeing the light. This ketchup is so good, we weren't sure whether we were eating

the edges of the cone before baking, two nonstick cone molds for making six cones, and two nonstick stands for baking the filled cones.

The Invisible Chef Rosemary Raisin Savory Muffin Cake Mix

SRP: \$8.95
www.invisiblechef.com
800-456-7115

We picked it because:

This savory muffin from The Invisible Chef in Canton, Ohio, was a cinch to make and delectable to eat. Toasted pecans, plump golden raisins, dried rosemary and a hint of black peppercorn make this mix stand out from the crowd. We loved the feeling of preparing something homemade that took only minutes to whip up.

The Spice Lab Aloha Sea Salt Collection

SRP: \$59.95
954-275-4478

We picked it because: Let the adventures in salt begin! This beautifully packaged and presented collection of sea salts features 11 of the most sought-



in the world. Presented in a portable and decorative package, the Aloha Collection from the Fort Lauderdale, Fla.-based Spice Lab cries out for proud placement on the kitchen countertop. The set also comes with reference cards that contain detailed descriptions and pairing suggestions.

Toas-Tite

SRP: \$29.99
917-689-9246

www.toasite.biz

We picked it because: This retro gadget rules. An authentic reproduction of the original Toas-Tite, which debuted in 1945, the newly made-in-China, second-generation version is pure vintage delight. We couldn't resist trying out different combinations of bread, cheese and assorted fillings. A minute or so on each side, and a toasty bread and gooey cheese toast is yours for the enjoyment. We also adored the packaging created by the new greater Chicago-area-based Toas-Tite LLC, which not only captures the nostalgia of the '40s, but also conveys exactly what the product is and does.



Torie & Howard Organic Hard Candy

SRP: \$4.99 (2-ounce tin)
888-826-9554

www.torieandhoward.com

We picked it because: These are not your mamma's hard candy! Made for today's more health-conscious consumers (only 12 calories per candy), these organic treats boast sophisticated flavors that sound as exotic and juicy as they taste. We savored them all, from the Italian Tarocco



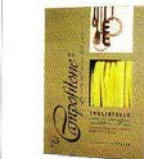
A SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION



All-natural, Antibiotic-free Duck

Maple Leaf Farm's duck is fed an all-vegetarian diet and never fed animal byproducts or given antibiotics or hormones. Raised humanely. Products are vacuum-packaged for freshness. Package QR code may be scanned for coupons and recipes. These products and more can be purchased at www.mlf-duckstore.com/tdirect/.

Maple Leaf Farms
Milford, Ind.
800-348-2812
www.mapleleafarms.com



La Campofilone Elite Gourmet Egg Pasta

For 100 years, La Campofilone pasta has used only simple, all-natural ingredients. Today, award-winning La Campofilone Elite is made using eggs from free-range hens fed exclusively with non-GMO cereals and non-GMO durum wheat grown in the Le Marche, Italy. Many cuts available. Each 8.8-ounce box has a 2-year shelf life. SRP: \$6.95.

Imported by Po Valley Foods Corp.
Locust Valley, N.Y.
516-801-4688
www.povalleyfoods.com



Heart Shape Ravioli Cutter

SCI presents its Heart Shape Ravioli Cutter. This ravioli cutter is perfect for the ravioli lover in your life. It features a real wood handle and an aluminum cutter. Its unique design makes it simple to cut and seal ravioli in one simple step. It is 3 1/2" (85 mm) and is hand wash and dry only.

SCI Scandicrafts
Camarillo, Calif.
800-966-5489
www.scandicrafts.com



Tookies Brand Scrub Cloths 3-pack

Set of three Tookies Brand multipurpose scrub cloths are hand knit by a women's co-op in Calcutta, India, that uses Fair Trade practices. Made from 100 percent certified organic cotton. Tookies are perfect for scrubbing everything and last for years. Machine wash/dry. SRP: \$10.99.

Sinko Corp.
Sparks, Nev.
408-371-3007
www.tookies.com

"la Campofilone" pasta all'uovo dal 1912

For one hundred years, La Campofilone has used only simple natural ingredients like eggs from free-range hens fed exclusively with non-GMO cereals and non-genetically-modified, high-protein durum wheat grown exclusively in the Le Marche region. The result is light, delicious, high protein authentic pasta which rivals most homemade egg pastas.

Award-winning La Campofilone - naturally Italian.



Imported by Po Valley Foods Corp • (516) 801-4688 • www.povalleyfoods.com



Quick & All Natural Soups

Quick & All Natural Soups are available in vegetarian, organic, sea salt, gluten-free and kosher options. Nutrition info such as protein, fat, fiber and calories is on package front. The 100 percent natural soups are also trans fat- and MSG-free. SRP: \$1.79-1.99.

The Spice Hunter
San Luis Obispo, Calif.
800-444-3061
www.spicehunter.com
Expo East Booth 1178



Gluten-free Vegan Pizza Crust

Venice Bakery offers a complete range of great-tasting, gluten-free pizzas in original plain and Italian seasoned flavors.

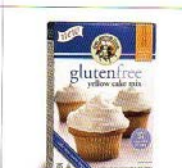
Venice Bakery
El Segundo, Calif.
714-408-8903
www.venicebakery.com



Laguna Sunrise Crushed Bamboo Cutting Boards

These cutting boards are accented with crushed bamboo, a byproduct from the manufacture of Island Bamboo's other products. These double-sided cutting boards include hang holes and gravy grooves, are naturally anti-microbial, and provide a smooth, hard surface. A 12-by-11-by-5/8-inch utility board, a 15-by-11-by-5/8-inch cutting board and a 19-by-13-by-5/8-inch carving board are available. SRP: \$19.99-\$49.99.

Island Bamboo
San Clemente, Calif.
949-492-9321
www.islandbamboo.com
Dallas Total Home & Gift
(The McLendon Co.)
Booth 1030



King Arthur Flour Gluten-Free Yellow Cake Mix

King Arthur Flour has expanded its line of premium gluten-free baking mixes with a Gluten-Free Yellow Cake Mix. The new mix is free of the top eight allergens. King Arthur Flour's gluten-free baking mixes are third-party certified by the Gluten Free Certification Organization and in addition, they are produced in a dedicated allergen-free facility. They are also certified kosher by the Chicago Rabbinical Council. SRP: \$5.99.

King Arthur Flour, 800-827-6836,
kingarthurfloor.com.