

## Bibo cibo

### Food writers

Long before Jamie Oliver or Mrs Beaton, there was *The Art of Cooking* by Marcus Gavius Apicius. The book dates from the 1st century AD and is the oldest recipe book to survive from antiquity.

Like most food writers, not all of Apicius's recipes are his own, with about two fifths of them being drawn from a variety of sources. He produced ten books in all, arranged by the ingredients – meat, fowl, seafood, vegetables and legumes – just like in a modern cookbook.

Just as with Mrs Beaton, whose recipe for rabbit stew begins with "First catch your rabbit", Apicius

## Bite size

Vanessa  
Carswell



### Beauty of bread

The smell of freshly baked bread is now wafting through Dublin's Docklands. Owen Doorly opened Il Valentino there in November, with the intention of "putting bread back at the centre of the table". The bakery also has a cafe that serves pastries and good quality coffees, teas and hot chocolates.

Having recently returned to Ireland after 14 years spent living in Italy, Doorly says the quality of bread available in Ireland is poor. He imports specialised ingredients for his Italian and French breads. The bakery is also beginning to supply its produce to restaurants and independent shops. Visit Il Valentino at Grand Canal Dock.

### El Bulli's magic oil

tions lottery for those wishing to taste its fare. Now, the El Bulli taste is available to those without a winning lottery ticket, through Adrià's new range of aromatic olive oils.

The oils are to be sold exclusively by Harvey Nichols, and will be available at its Foodmarket in Dundrum Town Centre. Taking a customary tangent to the usual flavours, Adrià's chilli oil is also flavoured with cardamom. The range also includes oils flavoured with fried garlic, lemon zest and soy and ginger.

### M&S's new direction

Retail giant Marks and Spencer is launching a new range of cooking ingredients, in an effort to reposition itself away from the ready-meal market.

Designed for those that want to cook at home but would like a little help, the ingredients include ready-to-use stocks, breadcrumbs and ready-to-roll icing, as well as basic stock cupboard essentials, such as herbs and



Ferran Adrià and, below, the new M&S range



### New taste in Youghal

Often regarded as the food capital of Ireland, Co Cork has a new kid on the food block – and one with a conscience too. The old priory in Youghal is the setting for

ermen. Visit the restaurant's website at [www.thepriory.ie](http://www.thepriory.ie), or book on 024-91482.

### Wicklow market

You might be thinking of making a New Year's resolution to see more of the countryside, or to visit more of Ireland's best stately homes and attractions. One way of combining this with a foodie outing is to go to the market at Russborough House in Wicklow, which takes place on the first Sunday of the month.

Stalls here include the fantastic Soul Bakery (breads

## In Season



### Guinea fowl

An oven-ready guinea fowl looks like a small chicken and tastes quite similar, but with a slightly gamey flavour. Native to west Africa, and eaten throughout northern Africa, the guinea fowl has been a regular part of the area's diet since ancient times.

Images of the birds appear in Roman mosaics and were brought to Europe by the Portuguese in the 16th century. Like all birds, it is best to eat free-