

Case Study

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My career in food and drink

Lucinda Bruce-Gardyne, Founder, Genius Foods Ltd



“The food industry involves creativity, science, engineering, commerciality, international opportunities, strategy, finance, innovation – there is something for everyone and it is fast paced too. There is never a dull moment.”

Q: How did you get started in your career in food and drink?

A: After graduating from university with a degree in Physiology, I trained as a chef at Leiths School of Food and Wine then Bibendum restaurant in London. I co-wrote the Leiths Techniques Bible for Leiths, followed by How to Cook For Food Allergies which demonstrates how to substitute the top five allergens successfully in cooking. This led to my first gluten free bread recipe which I continued to develop, first on my own, then with the gluten free bakery.

Q: What was your route to get to this job?

My son was diagnosed with a gluten intolerance. With my cheffing and food science background I decided to develop a fresh gluten free bread for him and others like him, missing out on bread. I commercialised my kitchen recipes with the largest gluten free bakery in Scotland in 2008 and launched Genius bread across the nation in 2009.

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Genius is the leading UK brand in gluten free bakery and we bake bread 24/7 every day of the year.

Q: What did you study at school and how relevant were the subjects?

A: I studied chemistry, biology and English A levels. They have been extremely relevant. The science has trained me to take a scientific approach to developing new products and the English allows me to communicate internally and externally with confidence.

Q: What does your job involve and what are your main responsibilities?

A: I am on the Board as a Non-Executive Director, Genius Brand Ambassador and as Product Guardian and Innovator advising the Product and Marketing teams.

Q: What is the best thing and the worst thing about your job?

A: The best thing is spending time on the line in the bakery with the team. There is nothing better than scaling and launching a new product, particularly as it is often the first of its kind in the gluten free category.

The worst thing is when we get product quality wrong and upset our consumers. Gluten free bread is very difficult to make and sometimes loaves leave the bakery in less than perfect

condition. This is very disappointing to our consumers.

Q: Why were you attracted to a role in food and drink?

A: There is nothing more special than enjoying delicious food with family and friends. It is also fascinating to take a concept product to launch as it involves so many development stages involving many individuals with diverse skills and talents.

Q: Would you encourage others to consider a career in food and drink?

A: I would. The food industry involves creativity, science, engineering, commerciality, international opportunities, strategy, finance, innovation – there is something for everyone and it is fast paced too. There is never a dull moment.