



PRESS RELEASE

CELEBRATING A GREAT BRITISH INSTITUTION

When, in 1762, the 4th Earl of Sandwich called for his manservant to bring him some ‘cuts of beef’ between two slices of bread (toasted) he could hardly have imagined that his words were to set in motion a trend that, two centuries later, has come to dominate our lifestyles.

The Earl’s motive was that he wanted something to eat but did not want the inconvenience of having to stop gambling, and it is the same today with sandwiches providing a convenient, portable and easy-to-eat meal that can be consumed on the move or at a desk with the least disruption to our busy lives.

Today over 11 billion sandwiches are consumed in Britain every year. Around three quarters of these are made and eaten in the home or carried out of the home in lunch boxes to offices, schools and factories. The balance – over three billion – are made by commercial sandwich makers and either sold ready-to-eat in shops or served as meals in public sector establishments like schools and hospitals.

Indeed, since the launch of the first packaged sandwiches by Marks & Spencer in 1980, the UK has seen a whole industry grow up around sandwiches.

Today the commercially made sandwich industry employs well over 300,000 people and is a major contributor to the economy, with an annual turnover in excess of £6 billion.

Furthermore, what started out as a simple meal alternative in the 1980s has become highly creative, with a huge range of choices available in the High Street. Even the simple ploughman's has become an exotic Italian Mozzarella and baby tomato sandwich on ciabatta bread.

But it is not just in Britain that the sandwich has come of age. Most of the rest of the world is fast waking up to this 'new' way of taking lunch. From the USA to Japan and even France, the sandwich is now an accepted part of lifestyles and the UK industry is seen as the leader in this market.

So we really do have a world-beating food we can be proud of - which is why the British Sandwich Association, the trade body for the industry in the UK, takes time out every May to celebrate this success story with British Sandwich Week.

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For further press information please contact BSA Director Jim Winship on 01291 636331 or 07850 104034



The British Sandwich Association is the trade body representing the sandwich industry both in the UK and overseas, including both commercially made sandwiches and the ingredients used for making sandwiches in the home. The commercial sandwich in the UK employs in excess of 300,000 people in the UK.