



WORLD'S FINEST AT SHOP 2008!

World Cheese Awards and Guild of Fine Foods (UK) secured for SHOP 2008

SHOP 2008 has enjoyed the international seal of approval with the announcement that both the **World Cheese Awards** and the **Guild of Fine Foods** will feature at the event this year - Monday, 29th Sept to Wednesday, 1st Oct 2008 at the RDS.

The **World Cheese Awards** is the largest international cheese competition in the world. Established since 1988, this will be the first time it is staged outside of the UK. As the 'cheese Olympics' the decision was made to stage in foreign locations and the first port of call was Dublin. Over 70 retailers from the UK, Europe, USA and beyond will judge almost alongside the cream of the Irish cheese trade on the first day of SHOP (Wed 1st Oct) with last year seeing a massive 2,000 cheeses tasted! The Supreme Champion will be announced on the last day of the show at an official Awards ceremony.

A further endorsement of the calibre SHOP and a confirmation of its reputation as the primary event on the food & drink calendar, **The Guild of Fine Food** is organising **The Great Taste Gourmet Food Hall** at SHOP this year. The Guild is the British association for speciality food retailers and producers who also publish **Fine Food Digest** for the retail trade and **Artisan** for producers. With 1300 members, they run training courses and two trade shows in the UK. This confirmation is a perfect fit for the event as SHOP already devotes an entire section of the show to the **County Enterprise Boards** as a showcase for ingenuity and innovation in food and drink on a local level - a section that has proved hugely popular at the event last year and will this year represent 18 Enterprise Boards bringing a mix of 49 businesses alone.

Designed for those in the Retail, Food and Drink sector to develop new business, launch new products and network, SHOP (which sees the merger of two of Ireland's most well-established trade shows IFEX and Forecourt), welcomed **5,000 focused buyers and decision-makers** last year including Multiples Buyers, Forecourt & Retail outlets, Independent Retailers, Convenience stores, Symbol Group Buyers, Supermarkets, Wholesalers and Delis.

Joint Managing Director of EXPO Events, Garret Buckley says:

"We're truly proud to make this announcement. SHOP is already established as an event not to be missed for the food & drink trade in Ireland. But this level of support and affirmation from the Guild of Fine Foods and The World Cheese Awards simply takes it onto a whole new international level. SHOP is much more than a great networking and sales opportunity; it is a library of information aiming to anticipate what retailers and marketers

in the industry need as they develop their businesses in line with industry trends, legislative amendments and competitive challenges”.

SHOP places particular emphasis on the provision of information and education to the sector by means of a series of seminars, workshops and initiatives with key industry associations such as: **Convenience Stores and Newsagents Association (CSNA)**, **Stimutran SME** (in conjunction with **The Irish Exporters Association**), **POPAL** - the retail marketing trade association (UK & Ireland), **Irish Petrol Retailers Association**, the **Specialist Coffee Association of Europe (SCAE)** and more.

An innovative “must see” for those in the retail food and drink sector, the **CSNA SHOP** (in association with the **Convenience Stores & Newsagents Association**) has been designed to demonstrate how to maximize profits through attention to display techniques and systems, merchandising, marketing and sales tools and the best use of space. This unique feature offers specialised guidance on how to make the most of your shop space by providing practical demonstrations and advice from industry experts.

Placing due importance on **corporate and social conscience**, SHOP will place particular emphasis this year on education in this matter with the seminar programme including issues relating **fair trade** and **energy efficiency**, which has the added advantage of generating cost savings in business.

SHOP will also host its prestigious **Product of the Show Awards** which has proved a launch-pad for smaller businesses/new products into the market limelight over the years

Building on its reputation of excellence SHOP once again presents a menu of initiatives both recognising and promoting innovation across the industry including and the **Irish Chapter of the Speciality Coffee Association**, which will stage the **National Cupping Competition** challenging the tastebuds of coffee experts throughout the country.

Further information on the series of seminars and workshops can be viewed on www.shopexhibition.com

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All media enquiries

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