

Enough Already...

Cupcakes

OCCASIONALLY a food fad appears that gets people terribly excited. It is the same as fashion but slightly more annoying – not least because it invariably involves the repackaging of something that has been around for years and sensibly ignored by most people. So it is with cupcakes. For reasons best known to others these hideous little things are now deemed to be the height of good taste. They are, of course, entirely lacking in taste in all respects. Fine for children's tea parties, possibly, but beyond that they are the Jedward of baking. Designer Patrick Cox opening a cupcake shop in Soho was pushing it, now Peggy Porschen has opened an Academy. It's time to stop.



Punchy Chap Jackson Boxer



The passionate young restaurateur behind Brunswick House Café has an illustrious culinary heritage. Now it's his turn to continue the tradition



AS GRANDSON of cookery writer Arabella and son of Charlie – novelist and part-owner of Italo deli in Vauxhall – Jackson Boxer, 26, grew up surrounded by British food revivalists. Being the grandson of the irrepressible late Tatler editor Mark adds relish.

Work began at 16 washing glasses and being a waiter for Margot Henderson's private catering company Arnold & Henderson. "I was willing to do anything to be part of the industry," he says. He would later move onto Great Queen Street – an alumni of the St John school of robust cooking – as a waiter, barman, cook and manager. "I learnt the importance of creating an

experience through food," he says. He terms this modern British shift from fine-dining "faux nostalgic ironic comfort" – Pseud's Corner alert.

We meet at Brunswick House Café – which he opened earlier this year in an imposing 18th-century warehouse brimming with architectural salvage from specialists Lassco. They're for sale and it's well worth a stroll. The cafe is similarly a hotch potch of mismatched furniture

and curios. The food is unfussy - brawny sandwiches with ham and cheddar and soup and salads - and excellent coffee. Best are the cocktails and Portuguese Pasteis de nata (custard tarts). Boxer draws a parallel with Roganic – the Simon Rogan pop-up in Marylebone – and cites their proximity to New Covent Garden Market as central to chef Nicholas Balfe's dishes. He's some way off that level yet and we're not certain it's a suitable benchmark for Boxer's style but there's no doubting his passion and one has the sense this is just the beginning of Jackson's world.



Brunswick House Café, above, is a hotch-potch design with bold cooking

◆ The Brunswick House Café, Wandsworth Road, London SW8, 020 7720 2926, brunswickhousecafe.co.uk