

# Artisan bread made with 'love'

A Kapiti bakery in a former milk factory was one of the winners in the *Cuisine* artisan awards, scoring an accolade for its garlic fold bread, writes Sarah Catherall.

**T**HE SECRET to baking a good loaf of bread, says baker David Winterbottom, is time. If you're in a hurry, don't even think about it. Mind you, Winterbottom wouldn't recommend resorting to mass-produced, sliced bread. "It's full of water and chemicals and that's what holds it up," he says.

The UK-born baker knows a lot about bread – he's been baking it for more than two decades. Each week, Winterbottom and his team make 5500 loaves of Kapiti Artisan breads in a bakehouse in the old Otaki milk treatment station. One of those products, the garlic ciabatta fold, has just won a gong in the *Cuisine* artisan awards – one of 12 products selected by judges.

After setting up the bakery seven years ago, Winterbottom is delighted, especially as it's his first award. "We've been here quietly working away, doing our thing over the years," he says.

His partner, Sandy Phillips, a cook and former L'Affare barista, pipes up that the secret to a good bread is "love".

In truth, there are a few ingredients that make these breads a winner. Apart from being delicious, and handmade and handmoulded,

a big plus is their long shelf life. The breads are par-baked and chilled, so they last for four weeks in the fridge, and can be frozen too. It's a winning recipe when you're competing with other fresh breads. "Our slogan is 'fresh when you want it'," he says.

Every afternoon at his Kapiti Artisan Bakery, Winterbottom and his team make doughs that then sit and ferment overnight, intensifying the strength and flavours of the breads that are pulled piping hot from the oven the next day. "All our recipes start here the day before."

They're also natural, without a single preservative, and Winterbottom moulds every single bread that goes into the oven. With eight products in the range, they're still making the products they started out with in 2005. "I wanted them to taste good and to be affordable."

*Cuisine* award judges raved that the quality and flavour of the garlic ciabatta fold was what made it an award winner.

Winterbottom started his career as a pastry chef but the key moment was working for British Bakeries at a time when specialty breads were just beginning to be baked for the major supermarket chains. "Specialty breads went from

nothing to taking over great big aisles in the supermarkets. They're a big thing over there now."

Now, Kapiti Artisan breads are stocked in 100 outlets around New Zealand, from a Four Square in Russell down to the bottom of the South Island. Interestingly, he began stocking South Island supermarkets only in the middle of last year, but the breads have been gobbled up. Moore Wilson's sells about 400 a week, and is one of the biggest stockists.

"When I first came to New Zealand and thought about doing this, I thought about just supplying locally but the population wasn't big enough. Compared to the market in England, we had to treat New Zealand like one major town, and that's what we've been doing."

Kapiti Artisan breads are tasty and surprisingly low in fat, at just 10-12 grams of fat in half a loaf.

"That's less than if you put butter on top of your bread. We put a lot of flavour into the topping, but the bread is the main thing."

It's a far cry from the stotties or oven button muffins he ate growing up in Lancashire, England. Over there, he says, regional breads and pastries reign, with different products hailing from different areas. "In

London, you'd eat baps. The difference in New Zealand is that you've got immigrants who have brought their products in and they're prominent here."

Winterbottom is keen to expand his range and introduce sweet products too.

But for now, he's focused on employing more

staff, and keeping his artisan business small enough to remain manageable.

While Winterbottom moved from London to the Kapiti Coast for a quieter pace of life, "it hasn't been that much slower really".

Meanwhile, Zany Zeus founder Michael Matsis won an artisan award for his smoked yoghurt. Matsis has been making dairy products for 13 years, and his first retail store and cafe opened in Lower Hutt last year, while the products are also available online.

Head judge Fiona Smith said Zany Zeus smoked yoghurt was a unique product "but it's also absolutely delicious".

The supreme winner of the awards being announced today was Quina Fina tonic water, while Lewis Road Creamery premium salted butter was runner-up. Other winning products included Manuka Smoke Company Smoke Concentrate, and Taihiki Orchard Fresh Vialigrette.



Successful recipe: Sandy Phillips and David Winterbottom, of Kapiti Bakehouse.



Unique: Michael Matsis of Zany Zeus.



Gong winners: Kapiti Bakehouse Garlic Ciabatta Fold (left), Zany Zeus Smoked Yoghurt.