Taste
A Spectrum Of Delight?
A New Way To View Taste
What’s This?

ROYGBIV
What’s It Got To Do With This?

ROYGBIV

Erithacus Rubecula
Here’s A Taste Clue!
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- Ideas Evolve
- As humans we struggle to understand, explain & describe our world
- Taste is no different – we are limited by words in articulating & explaining what our senses detect
- If we think it’s difficult .... What about our consumers?
Sensory Decoding

• Here’s a couple of guys you may recognise....

• Raphael’s Spirit of Athens – with Plato & Aristotle

• One tried to explain the world by a sense of feeling and intuition, one by a sense of scientific empiricism

• Hence we have 5 senses.....
Sensory Decoding

• But do we really have 5 senses.....
So, what about taste?

• Here’s The 7Senses Organisation logo...say hello to proprioception & the vestibular system!

• Now with my amendment! So, 8 & counting....
So, what about taste?

Here’s a Familiar Tongue Map

However, it is simply wrong.....
Understanding Taste

• Taste is like a spectrum....a range of triggers that our senses decode imperfectly

• Like all good stories it has a beginning, a middle and an end – that is where the tongue map originated

• Though also like all good stories – there are a number of parallel plots!

• The Basic 4: sweet, sour, salt, bitter have been expanded by umami

• The fifth is a recent addition but there is some belief in there now being a 6th and even a 7th
Understanding Taste

• Enter Kokumi stage left

• This is the 6th taste

• It is the sense of in-mouth richnes, density and depth

• The word is an amalgam of the Japanese for Rich & Taste

• Can it really be detected?

• Its presence changes our consumption pattern – so something is occurring....
Understanding Taste

• I spoke about a 7th.....

• Which is really one of the basic 5 – according to the Chinese theory of Taste...

• Step forward the trigeminal nerve.....spice & pungency

• Capsaicin, chilli heat & burn & even menthol cooling....
The Sensory Map Is Actually Not The Point...

• We get obsessed with the absolute number of tastes....4, 5, 6, 7...

• What really matters is what they mean

• We should focus more on the experience rather than the trigger

• Step Forward Alfred Hitchcock!
The Sensory Map Is Actually Not The Point...

• Just like a story or a film – every Consumption Experience has a beginning, a middle and an end
• There is a story to be unravelled – the taste journey

• At key ‘Plot points’ (eg encounter, adverts, aroma, mid mouth, aftertaste etc) emotional shifts are triggered.

Put simply: it’s about the story, not the image – it’s about the experience not the taste
The Sensory Map Is Actually Not The Point…
Understanding The Journey: Uses In Taste
The US & Japan…

• Neophile vs Neophobe

• Not a new Brexit description of antagonists

• More about attitudes to newness

• Seeking the new or fearing the new – excited & delighted in discovery vs reassured and comforted in what’s known
The US: Seeking Artisan Values: New in Old – Craft Beer, Bread & Beyond..

• MGD, Hepa filters & striving for less – Coors Light & the death of flavour!

• San Francisco Steam Beer – looking for the old in the new

• Sierra Nevada & Cascade Hops. Finding the old in the new!

• Craft Beer = Back to Basics in brewing

• Is it new or old?
Japan

• The cultural divide....Shouganai

• It can’t be helped, it’s how it just is & has to be....

• This means that the Japanese have created a cultural taste phenomenon out of absolutely knowing and expanding every stage of a taste experience – giving each facet meaning, space and significance. We call it the tea ceremony....

• But the youth want something different – excitement, novelty & change...they are looking for the new in the old!
Japan: What’s This?

- Apple[13]
- Adzuki[2][13]
- Bakeable custard[16]
- Baked potato[2]
- Banana[14][15]
- Beni imo[2]
- Blueberry cheesecake[2][13]
- Brown sugar syrup[2][13]
- Cafe au lait[15]
- Cantaloupe[15]
- Cappuccino[2]
- Caramel macchiato McFlurry[13]
- Cherry[5]
- Chestnut[13]
- Chocobanana[2]
- Cinnamon cookie[2]
- Citrus golden blend[2]
- Corn[15]
- Creme brulee[15]
- Double cookie[16]
- Edamame[2]
- European cheese[17]
- Exotic Tokyo[14]
- Fruit parfait[2]
- Ginger ale[15]
- Golden citrus[15]
- Green bean[5]
- Hojicha[2]
- Hokkaido cheese and chocolate[1]
- Hokkaido Melon with Mascarpone Cheese[18]
- Hokkaido roasted corn[1]
- Hot Japanese chili[2]
- Kinako[15]
- Kobe pudding[6]
- Koucha[14]
- Kuchidoke Kakao[16]
- Lemon cheesecake[19]
- Maple[16]
- Matcha[2][14]
- Miso soup[7]
- Muscat of Alexandria[13]
- Okinawa sweet potato[6]
- Passion fruit[19]
- Pear[2]
- Ramune[16]
- Raspberry passionfruit[16]
- Red potato[5]
- Rilakkuma hotcake[17]
- Rock salt[13]
- Royal Milk Tea[20]
- Sakel[12]
- Sakura[14]
- Sakura matcha latte[17]
- Salt and caramel[13]
- Shikuwasa[21]
- Shinshu apple[2]
- Soy flour[14]
- Soy sauce[14][15]
- Strawberry[2][14]
- Strawberry cheesecake[13][15][17]
- Sweet pudding[13]
- Triple berry swirl[13]
- Vegetable juice[16]
- Wasabi[1]
- Watermelon[13]
- Yokohama cheesecake[6]
- Yubari melon[5]
- Yuzu[5]
Taste Strategy

• There is no such thing

• What you need is an Experience Strategy – old, new, masculine, stylish, challenging, optimistic – etc etc

• Taste is a servant to the emotions – be Plato and not Aristotle!

• That is why Guinness, Marmite & co work
Spectrum? No Mood!

• So, what is your Experience Strategy?

• How do you want your consumers to feel....that is the answer we must all seek– it is not the spectrum it is the message

• It is not the colour it is the picture, it is not the piece but the whole thing.

• Taste - = 4, 5, 6 or 7 – what really matters is what it means!
A New Way To View Taste

A Spectrum Of Delight?

No, A Story To Be Told