

# People • memories • stories

## Food hero

“WE SURVIVED BY DOING IT FOR OURSELVES”



**Lincolnshire pig farmer Jane Tomlinson's story is one of near-ruin and eventual triumph**

The idea that changed Jane Tomlinson's life came in 1998, amid a storm of violent protest. In August of that year, British pig farmers converged at Immingham Docks in Humberside to demonstrate against their treatment by the Government.

“There were hundreds of us,” says the founder of Redhill Farm Free Range Pork in Lincolnshire. “We were demonstrating against the ruling that cheap, factory-farmed pork could legally be imported from abroad, processed here and sold as British. We felt it was all over for British pig farming.”

The couple had three children and no contract to sell their pork. Their farm was owned by the bank. “Then



In the field-to-fork tradition, pig farmer Jane controls the process from sty to pork pie

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the realisation came that, if we wanted to survive, we had to do it ourselves."

## TURNING POINT

Jane's solution was to sell direct to consumers. The pigs would be slaughtered and butchered locally, then made up into packs with various cuts and sausages ("the right amount of meat for a family of four for a month"). Each pig would provide enough for six packs – generating more profit than Jane would make by selling her pigs on the open market.

The idea took off. "I wasn't prepared for the response," says Jane. She soon had as many orders as she could handle. Her new business coincided with the growth of farmers' markets, and Jane was instrumental in setting up markets across Lincolnshire. She now sells her pork, dry-cured bacon, pork pies, haslet (meatloaf) and sausages at 16 markets and to top restaurants.

## WORTH THE EFFORT

These days, Jane is happy all the "angry horrible stuff is in the past" and that she and husband Terry can farm according to their principles – and earn a decent living. Their pigs, duroc and landrace crosses, live outdoors and are raised to RSPCA Freedom Food standards, with space to roam, rootle and mud-bathe, and access to warm shelter when they want it.

Has the effort been worth it? "Yes," says Jane emphatically. "It's hard work, but the difference is that everything is under your control."

Find out more about Jane and Terry's produce at [redhillfarm.com](http://redhillfarm.com)

## Five minutes with...

### LIZ MCCLARNON

**In 2008 the former member of girl group Atomic Kitten won Celebrity MasterChef, even though (she says) she'd never turned on an oven before the show**

#### MUSIC TO COOK TO

Enya's *Paint The Sky With Stars* album.

#### COMFORT FOOD

Mum's cheese and broccoli soup. It's one of the

tastiest things on the planet, yet it only contains broccoli, strong cheddar,

water, salt and white pepper.

#### FEEDING THE FAMILY

A bowl of scouse with crusty bread and pickled beetroot. It comes from 'lobscouse', which is derived from the Norwegian word *lapskaus* meaning meat stew. It was eaten by Liverpool dock workers, who became known as scousers. It's a great, warming dish.

#### FAVOURITE FOOD

MEMORY Wednesday lunches at my great-grandmother's house.



We called her Nin (Welsh for nan), and she always had chopped onions in malt vinegar on the table. As a child I hated them but now I miss her so much just the smell gets me.

**LAST SUPPER** Oysters to start, fillet steak cooked blue to rare with béarnaise sauce, and for dessert, Eton mess.

Oysters are on Liz's dream menu



## The passions of...

### RICHARD CORRIGAN

#### I LOVE...

**Pinot Noir** Its elegance, variety and delicacy. It can win you over or dash you on the rocks.

**A good knife** It beats every kind of kitchen gadget I can think of.

**Butter** Olive oil is fine but butter has far more attitude and presence.

**Cooking** Simple as that. I mean, what more can you ask for than great ingredients and the time to cook? It's cathartic.



#### I HATE...

**Fuss** I hate fuss in anything but particularly in food. What's the point? Better to just get on with it.

**Unwarmed plates** Put good food on a cold plate and you might as well put it in the bin.

**Bad cocktails** Balance in a cocktail is everything.

**Large round tables** I like to see the eyes of the person opposite me, not metres of linen.

*Richard Corrigan is the owner of Corrigan's of Mayfair and Bentley's Oyster Bar and Grill, both in London*