

# dear olive

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## STAR LETTER



### Streets ahead



I've just been reading your review on Strada (*Streets ahead*, March 08). We have started using the one in Gunwharf Quays,

Portsmouth quite regularly and have nothing but the highest praise to give them. We visited on my birthday recently and the waiter must have heard my daughter mention what the occasion was because he brought us over two complimentary glasses of fizz. We haven't tried pizza yet because the other choices are much more emptying. Reading your article may put people off trying them but surely every branch will be different?

**Christine Drummond, by email**

This month's star letter writer will receive a mixed case of Gaymer's Orchard Reserve, a premium single orchard, vintage cider from Somerset. It's perfect with salads, light meals and cheeses or on its own. There are two varieties: Orchard Reserve Stewley, a medium-dry cider, and Orchard Reserve Newton's Tale, a full flavoured medium cider. From freshers and supermarkets.



Don't forget us!

I was disappointed to read your recent article on high street chains (*Streets ahead*, March 08). While I'm sure this is an invaluable guide to people who live in London, I'm not so sure it has any relevance to those of us living outside of the capital. As a Scot living in the northeast of England, I noted that many of the chains featured either had only branches within and around London, or the furthest north they extended was Manchester. I'm not sure how you expect to hold the interest of your readers who don't live in London.

**Gayle Murdoch, by email**

*Point taken, Gayle.*

*We'd love you to tell us about your favourite places, too – please join our reader panel, details below.*

## WE RECENTLY ASKED YOU WHAT YOU LIKE TO SNACK ON WHILE COOKING

- Bits of cheese, olives or Parma ham but my favourite is pickled chillies. I could easily get through a whole jar! Daniella Taylor, Essex
- Fresh crusty bread while sipping pink champagne. Ali Cleveland, by email

**Tell us about your favourite British food. Does shepherd's pie rock your boat? Bangers 'n' mash? Steak and ale pie? Email us at [oliveletters@bbc.com](mailto:oliveletters@bbc.com).**

EMAIL US

## Rhubarb rhubarb

Rumblings in the olive office this month

### MEAT MUDDLE

**Time spent discussing** 6 minutes

Yes, we always make sure our sausages are free range, but why do we forget to check about chorizo or Parma ham? Must try harder.

### STILTON SMOOTHIES, AS SEEN ON YOUTUBE

**Time spent discussing** 3 minutes

Wrong, wrong, wrong. Whatever's next – the Stiltini?

### SWEET INJUSTICE

**Time spent discussing** 8 minutes

Why do all the good sweets disappear (spearmint Pacers RIP) while horrible Parma Violets still exist? Not fair.

## JEANNE HORAK READER PANELIST



Jeanne Horak has a blog called Cook Sister (a pun from the Afrikaans for sweet pastry 'koeksuster'), [cooksister.typepad.com](http://cooksister.typepad.com). She is from South Africa and now lives in London and describes herself as more of a Nigel Slater-style cook than a Gordon Ramsay one. We asked her to test our mac 'n'

cheese pots, page 64.

Here's what she thought: 'It has been said that there are more than 3,000 ways to make macaroni cheese – from the great to the mediocre to the downright scary. If you have bad memories of mac and cheese as the stodgy block of starch you made in home

economics class, this recipe will change your mind and make you fall in love with the dish all over again. There is an indulgent amount of cheese in the sauce, rather like a cheese fondue with noodles, and the tang of mustard lends a wonderfully grown-up flavour. I love the clever idea of individual

portions, too – you can make four, eat two and freeze two!

■ **We want YOU to join our reader panel – log on to [panel.bbcmagazines.com](http://panel.bbcmagazines.com). Fill out the registration survey and we'll be in touch from time to time to ask your opinion on olive and everything food related.**