

Ad feature

History in the baking: Artisan delights and fresh cakes at Smethwick's Masovia Craft Bakery

Bustling down a busy city street at rush hour- weaving between commuters and shoppers- you could be forgiven for not pausing to take in the various shops either side of you. Tucked between the various establishments on Waterloo Road in the heart of Smethwick, however, is the Masovia Craft Bakery. Famed for its quality natural ingredients and traditional recipes, this artisan Polish bakery is worth stopping for.

The first of the Masovia franchise that sits beneath established parent company, Bakery Mazowsze, Smethwick's branch opened on 13 September 2021. Still very much in its infancy, this spacious premises is restocked every day with fresh produce whilst new flavours are being trialled amongst customers. Drawing on classic Polish and European recipes, the bakery serves an extensive range of sourdough breads and rolls, desserts, fresh cakes, sweet treats, pizza breads, pastries, and baked goods. Most of the produce is made by hand using traditional methods and techniques.

Championing a huge variety of bread, the lunch time crowd can take advantage of five different types of sandwiches, plus a lucrative coffee and hot drink promo. Samples of the bread can also be picked up so that you can try before you buy. One of the bestselling choices is the hot dog in a crunchy European bread roll with 20 different flavours of sauce to choose from. This is a typical delicacy found in Polish petrol stations.

As well as the conventional takeaway service of bread, cakes and treats, Masovia also takes part in the Too Good to Go app scheme. This is where customers can buy and collect fresh, unsold food that would otherwise be wasted at an affordable price. As well as cutting down on food waste, using this app has allowed the bakery to market to new customers that otherwise didn't know about the business as it is so new. Becoming part of the food wastage scheme was the idea of manager, Magdalena Wolanin.

With her creative and friendly approach to business, she is constantly coming up with new, innovative methods to drum up excitement and firmly establish the bakery as a front runner in the local area. Handing out branded soft toy animal keyrings to youngsters who come into the bakery regularly with their parents is just one of the many heart-warming ways Magdalena connects with her walk-in customers.

"All of our produce is baked freshly every single day," explains Magdalena.

"Nothing is kept on the shelf, especially overnight, and it is always sliced for the customer as and when they ask for it. If you come to our bakery, you will be sure to get a high quality product. I really believe in our recipes.

"There is a huge variety of baked good and sweet treats to choose from. As well as the smaller items, we also offer larger sized birthday cakes in a range of flavours, types, and shapes so there is something for everyone. The birthday cakes are extremely affordable yet are baked fresh with natural ingredients which sets us apart from your average supermarket cake.

"The staff are very friendly and are always listening to our customers about what they would like to see on the shelves. We give away free samples each day and listen to feedback to try and tailor our offerings to meet the needs of the local community. This includes offering vegetarian, gluten free and Halal products. We already have regulars who have a favourite bread."

Masovia Craft Bakery falls under the umbrella of successful subsidiary, Bakery Mazowse, which delivers freshly baked goods to more than 300 businesses and shops across the UK. Created by Polish-born Pawel Podolak and his brother-in-law Krzysztof Podolak, the pair set up the family firm in 2006. Initially a small bakery and factory, the passion for Polish food allowed the business to grow and expand, and it was through this expansion that Masovia came about to serve walk-in customers.

With plenty of ideas on the horizon and new products being introduced all the time, this bakery is certainly one to watch on the West Midlands foodie scene. The Masovia Craft Bakery is situated at 44 Waterloo Road in Smethwick and is open Monday to Saturday every week. A franchise in Walsall is also based at 113A Lichfield Road.

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