

Is express delivery the way forward for online grocery shopping?

M

&S has announced this month that they are to trial an on-line delivery service. Clearly demand for fresh convenience food is growing. However, part of the experience of shopping for Friday night treats in M&S is browsing the aisle, choosing something that takes your fancy amongst an ever-changing range of chilled treats. Times have

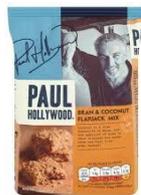
changed: perhaps this offer can take the hassle out of shopping for weekend/party food for our increasingly time-starved population? And with Tesco also trialling a one-hour delivery service, it would appear that express delivery is the way forward for online grocery, at least for a certain demographic living in urban areas, as it is the convenience of buying in bulk that remains the key draw for families. London and the South East is the best served for online services with Amazon announcing an extension across another 42 postcodes, and there is news this month that Britain topped a poll for the largest online food baskets in the world for the second year running¹. Meanwhile size is important for many of this month's new products but the smaller and daintier the better, particularly when it comes to treats. Smaller versions minimise the guilt of regular snacking even if many end up eating twice the amount. McVitie's Digestive Thins were a case in point: very 'moreish' but thin enough to be rated highly for Health. Smaller pack sizes may also help minimise the growing problem of food waste which has risen by 4,000 tonnes in 2016/2017 to 46,000 tonnes², with fresh produce, chilled and bakery items the most likely to be thrown away. However, not all products are as successful in a smaller format. For example, M&S's Dinky Handcrafted Sausage Rolls: a perfect bite size but resulting in too much pastry in relation to filling, as is often the case for this type of enrobed product.

Many new products tested this month contained popular ingredients such as Coconut, Almonds, Kale and Quinoa & M&S left us in no doubt about the season with a wide range of new Spirit of Summer launches:

SHOWCASE PRODUCT OF THE MONTH



These **Handy Foods Innovations** veggie burgers made the most of their Kale and Quinoa roots. Matching the top ratings in this category, one tester called them 'totally amazing'. (Review 170529).



An easily prepared artisan bakery product with a bit of Hollywood glamour (Bran & Coconut Flapjack Mix: Review 170520)



Almonds with a 'moreish' coating: Asda's Extra Special Sea Salted Chocolate Almonds, (Review 170521)



MOR's addition of Green Veg and Lentils made them 'super' healthy (Review 170516)



A gluten free soup that exceeded expectations: Soupologie's Curried Sweet Potato (Review 170527)



The nation's love affair with Cappuccino continues with Kenco's instant mix a good alternative to a coffee shop take-out (Review 170524)



But M&S's cold Coffee Spritzer proved a touch too continental for many of our testers (Review 170531)



M&S's Prosecco Jellies captured more of the summer spirit, although most wanted a stronger taste of fizz (Review 170532)



As did M&S's "delicious", summery Peach, Honey & Greek Yogurt Cake (Review 170511)

¹ According to Kantar World panel data, May 2017

² The Grocer 20/05/17