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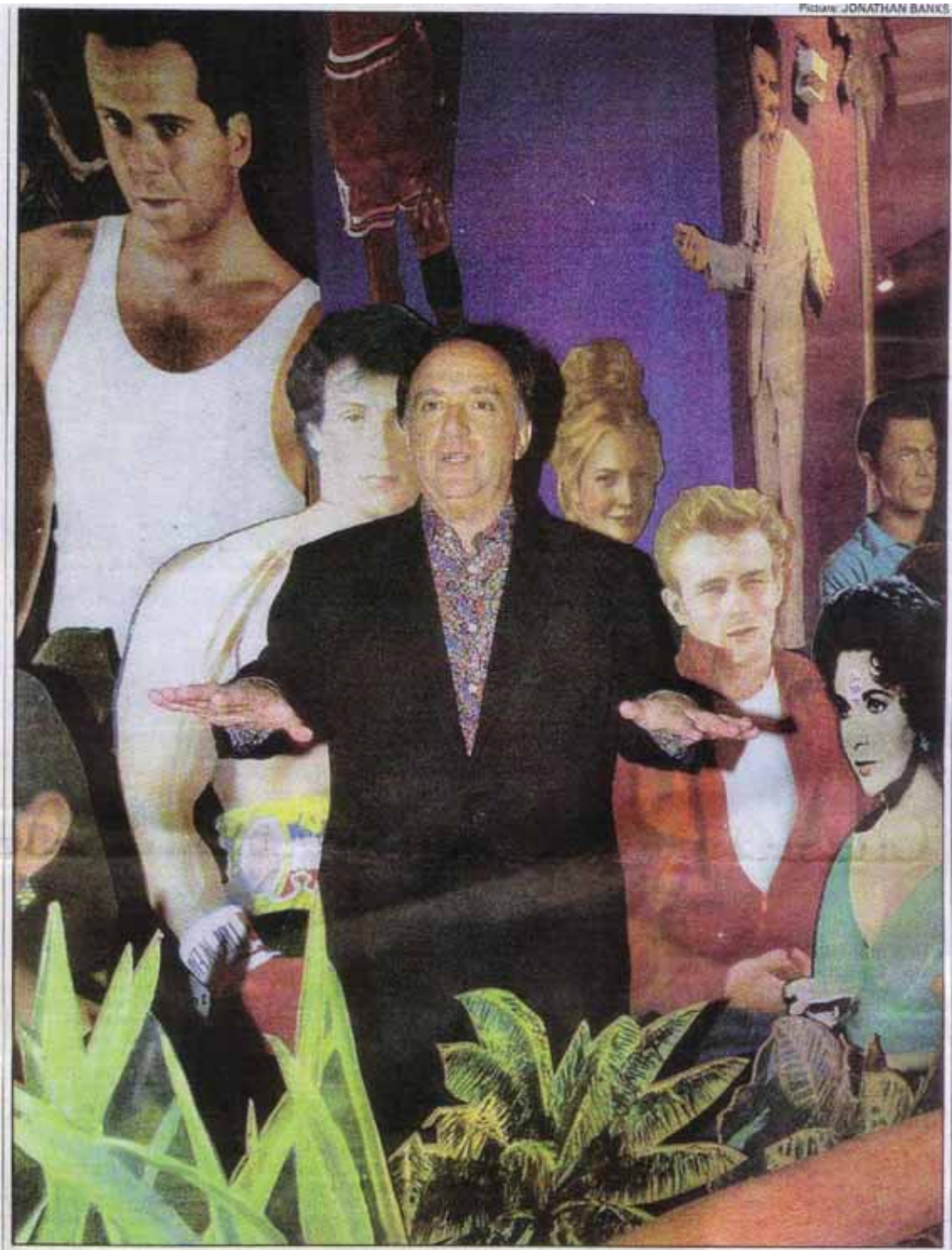
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Star servings: Robert Earl, above, founder of Planet Hollywood, hopes to "fill celebrity fridges" with a range of frozen food to be launched at the end of next week. Planet Hollywood, which boasts Bruce Willis and Justin Timberlake among its shareholders, has teamed up with Sainsbury's to

sell the range. Mr Earl said: "I have waited a long time, many years, for this and we're off to the races now. We will also be launching in the US and in Europe." Planet Hollywood, which has restaurants in 23 countries but only one in the UK in London's Leicester Square, has spent £500,000 on the launch.

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Planet Marco

Marco Pierre White has come a long way from the days when he famously threw people out of his Michelin-starred restaurants for daring to ask for salt. He's 'given back' his stars and is more likely to be heard enthusing about burgers than Chateaubriand. White, a major British shareholder in the Planet Hollywood restaurant chain, has helped to develop a menu of crunchy chicken and burgers for the new Planet Hollywood frozen food range. 'Planet Hollywood is the children's Gavroche,' says the father of four children aged 14, 10, eight and two. 'I hate posh food actually,' he says. 'I don't enjoy Michelin-starred restaurants - it's all so precious. My ambition is to take good eating to every sector of society. A lot of people have heard of Planet Hollywood, but will never come to London. Why should they be denied?' he says. 'Now they can go to Sainsbury's and buy a little bit of Planet Hollywood - what could be more fun?'

Planet Hollywood crunchy chicken, £3.75 for 400g, and buffalo wings, £2.99 for 400g



† The contents of the publications from which these
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START-UPS

after they had star customers



POSH NOSH... Victoria Beckham and her son Romeo, who was a Babylicious fan



BECK'S APPEAL... Sally Preston shows off her Babylicious food range

Posh is part of the Babylicious boom

THE boss of the Babylicious baby food firm thanks her lucky stars for one particular fan of her good stuff - Romeo Beckham.

The son of Victoria and David Beckham was introduced to the food by Victoria's sister Lizzie and her mother Jackie Adams after they spotted the Babylicious stand at a baby show in London.

Lizzie gave some to her daughter Talulah, then introduced Romeo to the frozen food range.

The company's founder and managing director Sally Preston says: "I am told he loved Babylicious when he was a baby."

Sally, 33, is a single mum to Hannah, nine, and six-year-old Jack and lives in Ealing, West London.

She set up Babylicious in November 2001 and says: "Our turnover last year, which was our first full year of trading, was over the £200,000 and this year we are on target to reach £1 million."

Before launching Babylicious, Sally worked for 20 years in the food industry, spending 11 years with Marks & Spencer as a food technologist.

After leaving M&S she set up her own business as a contractor, and she started to be going somewhat well in marketing opportunities.

But she went through an "unpleasant" divorce, then she was diagnosed with sickle cell.

Sally says: "If I had stayed with M&S in a well-paid sales job and had a happy marriage I probably wouldn't have started the business. But I was trying to work part-time

and know after my children at the same time, cooking home late at night and making food for them and then freezing it."

"It was then that I felt there was a gap in the market for frozen baby food for mums like me."

"I decided to take the plunge. I re-mortgaged the house and raised £25,000, borrowed £25,000 from my parents and cashed in all my savings and shares which amounted to another £15,000. So I started off with £65,000."

Sally used a room in her home as an office and found a licensed factory to make the food. She bought all the vegetables herself and even drove her van west, delivering to outlets around the country.

Awards

"Now she has moved the bottom end of her hair and sunglasses eight points - most of them mums who work part-time like she used to do - in an office next her home."

Babylicious, which is sold at selected ASDA, Iceland and Sainsbury's, has won six awards including the HSBC Start-Up Stars award in the bank's search for the UK's top entrepreneurs.

Sally is talking to other major retailers and has high hopes that Babylicious will be a nationwide brand within 12 months.

Sally advises other would-be entrepreneurs: "Think big. Don't just plan to be a niche industry. Aim to compete with the big boys. And remember, it will take longer and cost more than you think."

Local firms on top

MORE than half the population prefer to buy from a local business than from national firms, according to a new study by Lloyd TSB Business.

And a third more say they would give the local firm an equal chance with the multinational.

The survey shows people believe in supporting local industries. They also like the more personal service a local firm can offer and reckon small firms are more likely to do a good job because the boss cares in the business.

The bank says smaller companies should benefit from this.

Red tape is top problem

100 small businesses leading in the top 100 reasons for small business failure says NatWest Bank.

The bank survey shows half of those employing ten or more are not sure on their top problem.

But many are more worried about how hard it is to find skilled workers. Tax is a major difficulty for starting companies.

"These are the real business issues such as overseas rates of how firms compare figures don't make sense," says NatWest.

Alert over selling rules

OVER 110,000 in spent buying goods by mail order, over that one in three every year.

But many firms don't know their own selling rules, says the Office of Fair Trading.

The Distance Selling Regulations set firms must give information about their goods and provide written confirmation of the order together with delivery details.

A cooling-off period of seven working days must also be allowed in orders can be cancelled and the money refunded.

Home work can be risky

USING your home for work can cause serious business problems.

Specialist brokers SMI say: "If you have an office, workshop or storage shed at home and you don't tell your insurance broker or CAT, you could find yourself without cover."

The highest risk is for self-employed people who have customers or clients visiting home at home.

"Standard home insurance policies won't cover liability so they are being used by customers who have an accident on the premises," SMI adds.

Bonus boom

MORE firms than ever are paying short-term bonuses to top employees.

But many are cutting long-term staff benefits such as pensions and health insurance, according to Virgin Money.