

Sensory Inspiration

Highlights from the Women in Flavor & Fragrance Commerce (WFFC) New York trend excursion

Amy Marks-McGee (Trendincite) and Jeanine Pedersen (Takasago) recently led the WFFC's (www.wffc.org) walking tour through New York's Soho neighborhood to introduce a range of flavor and fragrance professionals to unique and inspiring ingredients and textures. The first stop was Harney & Sons tea company, which sells ~320 flavors of tea—both flavored and unflavored—including those for private label customers, such as Barnes & Noble and Caribou Coffee, and hotels. Those teas with added flavors are blended by the company at an upstate facility. Harney & Sons also creates some RTD teas flavored by honey and cane sugar, and has turned a cinnamon tea into a soda used in an ice cream float. During the visit, the most notable tea was the unflavored Lapsang Souchong, which had a strong natural smoky and leathery flavor and was described by one attendee as: “like drinking bacon.” A green tea was flavored with lemongrass, vanilla, coconut and ginger; a “Soho blend” had notes of chocolate, vanilla and coconut; the store also provides a jasmine and pomegranate oolong, and is considering a lavender flavor. The company tests blends in-store and occasionally “retires” flavors.

Next, the Pearl River Mart featured a vast array of Asian foods and goods. Spotted during an extended browse were: custard-stuffed Ritz crackers; sour-sop candy; salted tangerine with licorice; dried shrimp snacks; peanut cakes sweetened with cane sugar; haw slices; dried and sugared potato slices; absinthe dental floss; and candles scented by themes such as confidence, power, harmony and joy.

Next, retailer Space NK featured a “hand-picked” selection of brands that allow sales staff to “prescribe” the best skin care solutions, regardless of brand. *Life NK* is the store's private label brand, which incorporates natural fragrances. The store's top brand is *Eve Lom*, an oil-based cleanser with eucalyptus and clove. Space NK also carries unique fragrances, including the *diptyque* line.

The tour wrapped up with lunch at Kittichai, featuring fish cakes with cucumber and red onion chutney; pan-seared Arctic char with *dtom yum* broth; pad Thai with cashews, garlic chive and Shanghai shoots; and banana spring rolls with burnt honey ice cream.

This was followed by a visit to rice pudding boutique, Rice to Riches.



Harney & Sons offered teas with novel flavor blends and unflavored varieties with unique sensory attributes.



Valerie Belmont, Melis Cakirer, Jaime Call, Deborah O'Sullivan and Jeanine Pedersen (all Takasago).



Art Maloney (Apple Flavors and Fragrances), Helen Feygin (Intuiscent LLC), Jennifer Powderly (Robertet) and Amy Marks-McGee (Trendincite LLC) at lunch at Kittichai.



Pictured during the last stop at Rice to Riches: Valerie Belmont (Takasago), Joshua Engel (Ontology Works), Amy Marks-McGee (Trendincite), Dyann Coratti (Intarome Fragrances), Christina Neuner (Limited Brands), Jeanine Pedersen (Takasago), Kara Gerardi-Piacenza (International Aromatics), Krishna Kundu (International Aromatics), Helen Feygin (Intuiscent LLC), Melis Cakirer (Takasago), Italina Schifino (IFF) and Sharon Pepe (IFF).