

THE GREAT SALT

BEEF TEA

Beef Tea was considered a cure-all remedy in 19th century Britain. For those having trouble digesting their meals, it could also be served - 'peptonised', which effectively means part digested. Baking soda or (sorry) pancreatic fluid would be added to the tea to aid digestion.

MR T. DUNN'S HALF CENTURY BIRTHDAY SONG - IN THE ROCK SALT MINE, by Thomas Dunn, performed by The Time Bandits

Extracts from Oral Histories collected by Lion Salt Works and West Cheshire Museums: Barry Griffiths, Chris Hampson and Judith Lowe. Read by Ron and Cindy Dunn

SAMPHIRE TEMPURA SPICED PICKLED CARROT

with fermented wild garlic mayo,
and blinis with

The common name for Marsh Samphire, a halophyte (salt tolerant plant) is glasswort. The name 'glasswort' came into use in the 16th century to describe plants whose ashes could be used for making soda-based glass. The plants were harvested, dried, and burned. The ashes were then washed with water to form an alkali solution, which was boiled dry to create the final product, called "soda ash." This name refers to the archetypal plant source for soda ash, which was the small annual shrub *Salsola soda*.

In the 19th century a chemical industry grew up around Cheshire producing soda ash and other alkali products from salt. This in turn was instrumental in the development of the glass industry in St Helens. On the table are several glass pieces made at Ravenhead Glass, formerly of St Helens.

Both the carrot pickle and the wild garlic, picked by local forager Sam Webster, have been lacto fermented: preserved with the addition of salt (and time), allowing us to eat wild garlic in Winter.

BLESSING OF THE BRINE, traditional
performed by The Time Bandits

The Crystal Ballroom, by Peter Solan
read by Nick Hunt

SHIO BROTH with brine boiled egg and ALKALINE NOODLES

When we first visited the museum we were told a story of Salt Works employees boiling eggs into the boiling brine - cooking and seasoning them simultaneously. These eggs are served in a salt based 'shio' ('salt' in Japanese) broth.

The addition of alkaline ingredients to pasta or noodles gives them an elastic, springy texture. Common in Chinese and Japanese cuisine, this makes such noodles particularly suitable for use in soups

SALT BAKED CELERIAC SALAD

with lemon-dressed mixed leaf
and hazelnut

Salt baking is a very old technique which steams and seasons vegetables, fish and meat in a crust made of salt, flour and water.

'Etymologically, the key ingredient of salad, and the reason for its getting its name, is the dressing' ---An A-Z of Food and Drink, John Ayto, 2002. The name salad comes from Vulgar Latin 'Herba salata', literally 'salted herb'.

This salad is served in dishes made in the shapes of the flashes which populate this area, as a result of subsidence caused by rock salt mining.

SALT TELL, by Pete Coe,
performed by The Time Bandits

A Salty Earth
read by Laura Mansfield
feastjournal.co.uk

UMEBOSHI ICECREAM with SEABUCKTHORN SHERBET

Sea Buckthorn is a delicious citrus flavoured halophyte. This hardy plant which grows well on degraded and salted land, combats soil erosion and increases soil fertility, is increasingly commercially cultivated - a crop for the future?

When sodium bicarbonate meets an acidic solution, carbon dioxide is produced. In the case of this sherbet the chemical reaction between citric acid + bicarb (+ sugar), is activated by your saliva to produce Sea Buckthorn flavoured FIZZ. Old recipes for fizzy drinks ('sodas') use the same principal, though the taste of bicarb takes some masking (by a lot of sugar).

Umeboshi are fermented plums, made with up to 20% salt. They are a natural preservative for foods and help prevent food poisoning - the perfect way to end a meal.

and to send you on
your way: a

BANANA

Bananas are rich in potassium, a mineral which is alleged to ease the effects of salt over consumption