

THE IRISH TIMES

# magazine

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Saturday, December 4, 2004

COLDSET COLOUR SUPPLEMENT OF THE YEAR

## LU THORNELY

Conversing with a client over tea in the old-fashioned library bar at the Central Hotel in Dublin, Lu Thornely is an ideas machine. A virtually unending list of hot and cold hors d'oeuvres trips from her tongue – carpaccio of beef with rocket, truffle oil and caper salad; barbecued asparagus; miniature paper cones of fish and chips with homemade tartare sauce; spicy lamb burgers with yoghurt and mint raita.

Whether it's a gala birthday party at a country house, or a kids' 21st soirée in a castle, Lu's vibrant food takes centre stage at any event. Partly evocative of Elizabeth David, part Claudia Roden, with a touch of Nigella, Lu's fresh, Mediterranean and Middle Eastern-influenced food is highly individual. No project is too daunting. She created a replica of the Italian feast served in the film "Big Night" for a party of 40 recently, and devised a "cheese tier" – a spectacular creation featuring rounds of Stilton, Camembert, Durrus, and Chèvre cheeses of decreasing size, arranged on tiers like a wedding cake – for a bride who just didn't fancy fruitcake. Prices start at €10 per person for a canapés event, and go up to €60 for a multi-course sit-down meal. Lu works countrywide.

◆ Lu Thornely, LaraLu Foods, 1 George's Street Arcade, Dublin 2 (087-9908003).





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COLDSET COLOUR SUPPLEMENT OF THE YEAR



## QUICK PICKS

**Eoin Lyons** goes out on the town with three artful shoppers: singer Brian Kennedy, caterer Lu Thornely and fashion designer Kate O'Brien



### LU THORNELY

Thornely owns the LaraLu food stall in the George's Street Arcade in Dublin, and also caters for private parties. This Christmas she will be returning to her family home in Bristol. "One of the things I'm giving my mother is a box of chocolates that will arrive each month of the year, delivered by The Chocolate Tasting Club in England ([www.hotelchocolat.co.uk](http://www.hotelchocolat.co.uk)). They send a selection of very good, fresh chocolates, nicely presented, for £9.95 per month. They don't deliver to Ireland, but it's a good choice for chocoholic friends in the UK." At her stall Lu sells Valrhona chocolate (from €7.50) that could make a nice alternative.

For the child of a friend, Lu has her eye on a pink leather "pig" push-car from the Pinocchio toyshop in the Westbury Mall, off Grafton Street, Dublin 2 (€115). At Pia Bang Home on South Anne Street, Dublin 2, she suggests looking at cake stands. "They're glass or ceramic, but all very pretty and reasonably priced – this one is lovely and costs €15." Also for foodie friends, Lu goes to Kitchen Complements on Chatham Street, Dublin 2, where a sophisticated potato masher costs €32.75. "It's something most people don't have, but it is the way to get restaurant-style creamy mash, and it can also be used for turnips, parsnips and other root vegetables – just put everything in and twist."

