

Mestemacher

1871

The family-run company Mestemacher GmbH from the Westphalian city of Gütersloh is now managed by the Detmers family in the 1st generation, and can look back on a long tradition as a specialist in the production of pumpernickel and packaged wholemeal bread. In 2014, the 572 employees of the internationally operating Group generated a turnover of approx. 145 million euros and achieved an export ratio of 24 per cent.

The Westphalians are a special breed of people, authentic and enduring. This ideally characterizes the tasty bread products that the industrial bakery Mestemacher in Gütersloh takes out of their ovens. Naturally with good, wholesome ingredients and a consistent shelf life. First and foremost is the pumpernickel, a typical Westphalian speciality. It is baked by Mestemacher in steam ovens at 100° Celsius for 20 hours, a technique that requires a lot of experience and skill on the part of the master baker. As a result of the long baking process, the bread obtains the typically sweet taste and the dark colour.

The company's history began in 1871, when master shoemaker Johann Heinrich Mestemacher established a bakery for his son and master baker Wilhelm. In the course of industrialisation, the cities grew, working and living were distributed differently, and food that could no longer be self-made was increasingly in demand – as was the case with daily bread. When at the end of the century it became possible to pack sliced ready-to-serve bread and to preserve it through pasteurisation, it could also be transported over longer distances.

Wilhelm Mestemacher specialised in baking pumpernickel, and sent his specialty product in tins across the entire country, as well as to the Dutch and British neighbours. In the 1920s, the company ventured overseas, exporting the brown sliced loaves as far as to the USA. Thanks to their shelf life of at least six months, they arrived fresh and wholesome. Even then, the rye needed for this was ground at the company's own mill.

The family business was steered through many crises and uncertain times, and was mostly in the hands of the female members of the Mestemacher family. Most recently in the hands of the granddaughter of the company founder, Lore Schittenhelm, née Mestemacher, and her husband Willy Schittenhelm. During the economic boom years after the Second World War, they managed to give the indigenous pumpernickel fresh impetus in a new round shape called “cocktailnickel” and to increase the number of staff to 120 employees. At the end of their working life, the two decided to sell the company as their own children did not want to become the successors.

And so it came to pass that their paths crossed with the baker's family Detmers. The thriving bakery run by Albert Detmers in Bielefeld Jöllenbeck had been sold by his sons Albert and Fritz for strategic reasons and the acquisition of Mestemacher's operation in 1985 promised an auspicious new beginning. Since then, the management trio comprising Albert Detmers, Fritz Detmers and Prof. Dr. Ulrike Detmers, assisted by a third-party management, has successfully steered the fate and fortunes of the Mestemacher Group. In addition to Mestemacher GmbH, the corporate group also includes four other subsidiaries based in Lippstadt, Bielefeld and Aerzen, as well as in Poznan, Poland. Helma Detmers belongs to the group of shareholders.

The corporate image of Mestemacher is subsumed under the catchy international name “Mestemacher – the lifestyle bakery”. With an entirely new brand image thanks to an emotional staging of the packaging design and a repositioning of the product range, the family



The headquarters of Mestemacher in the Westphalian city of Gütersloh

Chronology

- 1904 Master baker Fritz Detmers opens the village bakery Detmers in Bielefeld-Jöllenbeck.
- 1910 Wilhelm Mestemacher establishes a bakery specialising in pumpernickel.
- 1927 Fritz Detmers begins packing sliced pumpernickel and wholemeal bread in tinfoil.
- 1985 The two Detmers families acquire Mestemacher GmbH.
- 1994 Artists are commissioned to create the lunchbox edition “Panem et Artes” under the Mestemacher brand.
- 2013 Mestemacher is represented in over 80 countries around the world and is a world market leader in packaged specialty breads (unopened) with a long shelf life.



The classic: Mestemacher pumpernickel

enterprise is on the road to success. This includes the very early establishment of a bio-wholemeal bread range and the introduction of so-called ethnic-food breads such as Turkish pita and Indian naan bread. 1994 saw the cooperation with artists to create an exclusive lunch box edition under the title “Panem et Artes”, which is extended annually with new artists and collectable boxes.

The brand personality of Mestemacher is renowned for the social marketing segment: For many years, the company has been involved in socially relevant themes such as gender equality and work-life balance. The founding company awards valuable prizes to the Top Manageress of the Year, the Best Daycare Centre and the Father of the Year. Since 2008, Mestemacher has organized the Future forum that encourages a social discourse on the relevant issues of our time.

The Mestemacher Group can proudly look back on steadily rising annual sales which amounted to 145 million euros in 2014. The export share of the production, which includes more than 50 different kinds of bread and cakes, is currently about 24 per cent, and is an essential factor of the company’s economic success. Around 570 employees work at the four locations of the holding company.

Much of the planned investments amounting to 7.1 million euros will be used towards building a new administrative centre in Gütersloh this year. This is a sign of loyalty to the company’s founding location, a sign of solidarity with the Westphalia region and it demonstrates Mestemacher’s positioning between tradition and modernity. The

continuation of this successful path of the multi-generational company is one of the main priorities of the two owner couples.



Albert Detmers, managing partner, Prof. Dr. Ulrike Detmers, partner and member of the central management, Helma Detmers, partner, Fritz Detmers, managing director (r.t.l.)



Lactose- and yeast-free wholemeal bread which can also be consumed by vegans.

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Facts and *Figures*

OWNER FAMILY

Detmers family in the 1st generation

FOUNDED

1871, Gütersloh by Wilhelm Mestemacher

MANAGEMENT

owner-managed

MARKET POSITION

world market leader for unopened particularly long-life wholemeal bread

LOCATIONS

Gütersloh, Lippstadt, Aerzen, Bielefeld; Poznan (Poland)

INDUSTRY

foods

EMPLOYEES

572 (2014)

TURNOVER

approx. 145m euros (2014)

EXPORT RATIO

24% (2014)

EQUITY RATIO

over 60%