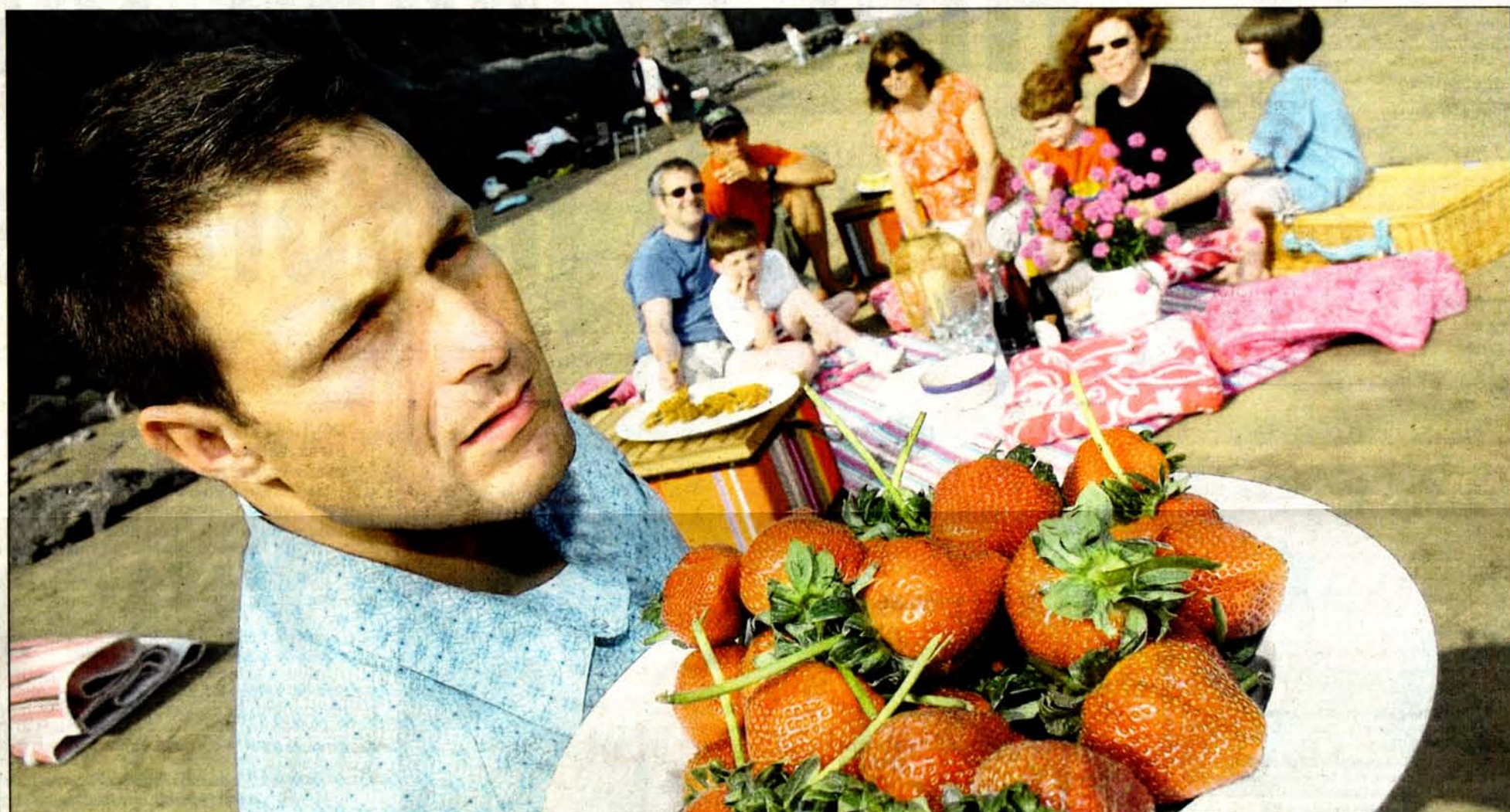


**Butler service
on beach**

Beach butlers are a tasty hit



LAPPING IT UP Adam Small delivers a hamper full of posh treats on Caswell Bay, Swansea.

RM060607C-001

If your idea of a posh picnic is making sure the Scotch eggs don't get squashed in the bottom of the bag, you should see the lavish spreads Swansea entrepreneur Tricia Hodge puts on.

Forget cheese and tomato sandwiches and a flask of tea.

Think instead of asparagus, crab, laverbread quiche, guinea fowl and fresh strawberries, all washed down with lashings of homemade ginger beer.

This is the kind of menu which is tempting people from around the world to eat al fresco on the beaches of Gower.

And it comes complete with a fancy rug and parasol, china cups and plates, and proper linen napkins — all delivered to the beach of your choice by a butler.

"People love the idea of taking a walk along the coastal path and then having a proper picnic brought to them, it is something a bit special," said Ms Hodge.

The fancy food with the personal touch is proving a hit with high-flying city-types from London who want a luxury break in Wales.

It has also proved popular with overseas holiday-makers — picnickers from Japan, China, America and Germany have all feasted on the beaches in recent weeks.

But local families too are having a picnic-with-a-difference, especially to mark special events.

The bespoke baskets of goodies are the brainchild of former PR executive Tricia Hodge, who spent 20 years organising big corporate and social events in London.

Ms Hodge moved to Swansea after falling in

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love with city surfer, Adam Small.

Now her company, internetoutdoors.com, is helping to raise the profile of Gower as a quality destination for a short break.

"We are offering something different for visitors," she said.

"For many it is their first time here — I think some of them are surprised just how beautiful it is here.

"This is a lovely part of the world and people really respond to it.

"The business is about encouraging people to come here, to stay here and spend their money here rather than heading down the M4."

As far as possible, Ms Hodge said the firm sources its food from Gower and South West Wales, with fruit, vegetables, meats, cheeses and seafood coming from local suppliers and farmers markets.

The Bishopston-based company also works with other Swansea businesses to offer clients activities like sailing trips or guided tours of local attractions.

But it is not just the well-to-do from the City of London who want a posh picnic in Pwll Du or Port Eynon.

"I think the picnics appeal to romantics," said Ms Hodge.

"We had one couple on a picnic where the man asked his girlfriend to marry him."

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