

TIONS

Cane rods of distinction

I HAVE been given a present of an Agutters split bamboo Valhalla cane rod. Can you tell me more about this company?

H.S., Norwich.



AGUTTERS are one of the very few traditional British rod makers still in existence. The Ashford, Kent-based company has been producing specialist split cane rods, together with a wide range of split cane accessories, for a great many years, writes ROBBIE WINRAM.

It is owned and run by Brian and John Norman who have gone to great lengths to ensure their products are as near to perfection as is physically possible.

The split bamboo that is used to make the rods is imported from the Orient, from the small province of Kwangi, where the bamboo actually grows to an average length of 40 feet.

Agutters do not buy in reel fittings, rod blanks or ferrules. They actually make them from scratch to their clients' individual needs, so each rod is quite distinctive.

The company boasts that it can make a rod to any taper and coloration including sunburst, natural, dark, mottled, even shaded edging to rustic patterns and feathering in the cane, using ebony and other inlays.

Top of their range is the Valhalla cane series which is made from one pole cut into hexagonal sections and glued. The rods have a crisp action and are individually handcrafted to the customers' requirements. The Avon series, which was successfully manufactured by Sharpes, is now made by Agutters after the drawings and specifications were kindly handed on by Harold

Sharp. There are slight design alterations and the rods are lighter, but the actions and tapers remain the same. Finally there is the Garrison GT Series providing excellent value for money.

The split cane accessories are too numerous to mention so it is well worth obtaining a catalogue from Agutters, Marionville, South Stour Avenue, Ashford, Kent TN23 1RS. Tel: 0233 626748 or Fax 0233 641787.

Culinary corner

WHAT, in your opinion, is the best way to cook trout? I usually grill mine in foil, but would be interested in your favoured method.

S.B., Derby.

THERE are many different ways to cook trout, but I find some of them tend to dry the fish out and I like the flesh to taste moist.

To do this I cook the trout in a sealed parcel of foil. Place the fish in the foil, add a knob or two of butter and sprinkle with Italian herbs (available in little jars from Schwartz). Add in about a quarter of a bottle of dry white wine and then seal the foil parcel.

Bake for about 30 minutes at 200C, remove from the oven and allow to cool. This cooling period allows the fish to re-absorb some of the juices but it's good either hot or cold.