



Enjoy the taste of Tax Equality Day

Wetherspoon is to cut the price of all food and drinks in its pubs by 7.5 per cent on Thursday 23 September – to highlight the benefit of a permanent VAT reduction in the hospitality industry.

To mark Tax Equality Day, prices at the company's 870 pubs (not including the Republic of Ireland) will be reduced for one day only.

At present, all pub food and drinks are subject to five per cent VAT as a result of the VAT cut by the chancellor in July 2020.

This is set to stop on Friday 1 October, when the VAT rate will rise to 12.5 per cent, with the aim of returning to 20 per cent, in stages, by 2022.

By comparison, supermarkets pay zero VAT on food and are able to use that saving to sell alcohol to customers at a discounted price.



Wetherspoon's chairman, Tim Martin, said: "Taxes should be fair and equitable.

"However, it is unfair that supermarkets pay zero VAT on food, but pubs and restaurants, in normal circumstances, pay 20 per cent.

"Pubs have been under fantastic pressure for decades, owing to the tax disadvantages which they have with supermarkets.

"Customers in our pubs on Tax Equality Day will find that the price of their food and drinks will be lower than normal.

"However, as a result of the VAT increase to 12.5 per cent, we will have to increase food prices by around 50p per meal.

"We urge the chancellor to create tax equality between pubs and supermarkets by making permanent the current VAT régime for pubs.

"He should note that the main impact of tax inequality is on high streets and town and city centres, which depend heavily on a diversity of prosperous hospitality businesses for economic, social and employment success."

Discount does not apply to alcohol in Scotland, owing to licensing regulations. Excludes airports and the Republic of Ireland.