



Sé Lá

BRAND CONCEPT PACK

A bakery on a street where three other
places already sell coffee and something
baked.

Westport, Co. Mayo · Three directions, one worked up ·
Prepared by The Once Over

Portfolio sample. Sé Lá is an invented bakery, built to show what a €995 brand concept contains. No real business is described, named or critiqued. Every figure is illustrative.

WHERE THIS STARTS

Four places on one street sell the same thing, and all four look the same.

Bridge Street has three cafés and a supermarket bakery counter within ninety metres. All of them sell coffee and something baked. All of them use a chalkboard, kraft paper and a script logo. Two of them use the same script.

That isn't a design problem, it's an arithmetic one. When four businesses look alike and sell alike, the customer picks on proximity and queue length — and you cannot win either of those on purpose.

The brief that came in asked for *a logo and a colour scheme*. That would have produced a fourth chalkboard.

WHAT WE LOOKED AT

Every competing shopfront on the street, photographed. Their opening hours, their Instagram grids for the last sixty days, and what each posts about. The nine-metre approach a customer actually walks. The Thursday and Saturday market footfall.

WHAT WE FOUND

Nobody on that street gives anyone a reason to come in *on a particular day*. Every offer is permanent. A permanent offer is a weak one — it can always be had tomorrow, which means it can always be skipped today.

A brand that is available every day
competes on convenience. A brand with a
calendar competes on wanting.

THREE DIRECTIONS

Three ways this could go. Each one has a cost.

These are genuinely different arguments, not one idea in three colourways. The recommended one is marked — and its risk is stated as plainly as the other two, because a direction sold without its downside is a pitch, not advice.

DIRECTION ONE

An Chéad Arán

The heritage bakery

Lean into age. Sepia, letterpress, "since". Looks immediately credible and costs almost nothing to execute.

The risk. It is the most copyable position on the street. Any of the three rivals can buy the same look in a fortnight, and one of them genuinely is older than you.

DIRECTION TWO ·
RECOMMENDED

Sé Lá

The bakery as a calendar

Six baking days, six loaves, six carved stamps drawn from the town. Friday's loaf is never baked on another day.

DIRECTION THREE

Muileann

The grain story

Single-origin flour, named farms, the milling process as the hero. Strong with a food-literate customer.

The risk. It asks the customer to care about provenance before they have tasted anything, and it puts you at the mercy of one supplier's harvest.

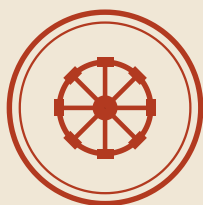
WHY DIRECTION TWO

Heritage and provenance are both *claims*. A calendar is a *structure* — it changes what the business does, not just how it looks, and it gives a customer a reason to turn up on a Thursday rather than a general warm feeling about bread. It is also the only one of the three that a competitor cannot adopt without visibly copying you.

THE ONE IDEA

Six carved stamps. One per baking day. Each taken from the town itself.

Beechwood, 62mm across, cut by a maker in Castlebar for about €40 each. Pressed into the crust before the final prove and printed on the bag. The set costs less than a fortnight of design work and cannot be copied inside a season — the next bakery would have to invent its own six, and everyone on the street would know why.



An Muileann

MONDAY · THE MILL WHEEL ON THE
CARROWBEG



An tOchtagán

TUESDAY · THE EIGHT SIDES OF THE
OCTAGON



An Bradán

WEDNESDAY · THE SALMON OF THE
CARROWBEG



An Cruach

THURSDAY · CROAGH PATRICK IN THREE
LINES



An Seol

FRIDAY · THE SAIL AT WESTPORT QUAY



An Punann

SATURDAY · THE SHEAF, FOR MARKET
DAY

THE WOOD

Beech, close-grained and cheap, cut on the end grain so the face does not lift after a few hundred presses. Oak looks better and splits.

THE CUT

2.5mm deep, one weight throughout. Anything finer closes up when the dough springs, and the mark has to survive an oven.

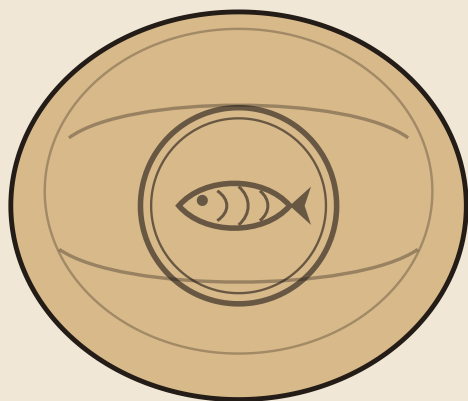
THE COST

About €40 a stamp from a maker in Castlebar, six for roughly €240 — once, not annually. Illustrative; get your own quote.

The order matters. The week runs from the mill upriver to the sheaf at the market — inland to the quay, work to market. A customer will never articulate it, and will still feel that the set belongs together.

HOW IT READS

On the crust, and on the bag.



Wednesday · An Bradán, pressed before the final prove



Thursday · one bag design per day, one colour pass

THE WEEK, DECIDED IN ADVANCE

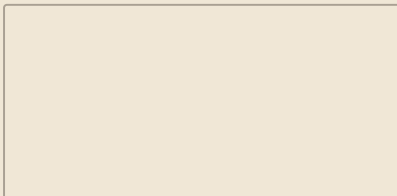
DAY	LOAF	WHAT IT IS	PRICE
MONDAY	An Muileann	Sourdough, 48 hours	€4.20
TUESDAY	An tOchtagán	Eight-strand plait, sesame	€4.60
WEDNESDAY	An Bradán	Rye and caraway, dark	€4.80
THURSDAY	An Cruach	Three-seed, the big one	€5.20
FRIDAY	An Seol	White pan, soft, for the weekend	€3.80
SATURDAY	An Punann	Spelt and honey, market only	€5.40

Prices illustrative — set against your own costs. The point is that there are six of them, and that they do not move.

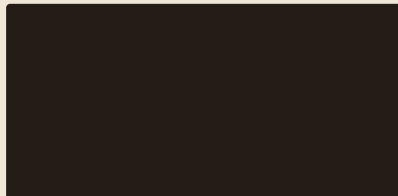
THE PALETTE

Three colours, one press pass.

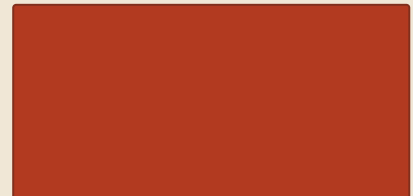
Drawn from things the bakery already owns: the oat of an unbleached bag, the dark of a well-baked crust edge, and the red of the shopfront's existing tiles. One hot colour keeps printing cheap — bags, labels and cards all run as a single pass on stock you can buy locally.



OAT PAPER · #F0E7D6
BAGS, LABELS, CARDS, WALLS



CRUST INK · #241C16
ALL TYPE. NEVER PURE BLACK



TILE RED · #B23A20
THE STAMPS, AND NOTHING ELSE

THE TYPE

Sé Lá

Instrument Serif — the name, the loaf names, anything set once and read from across a room. High contrast, so it holds its character when it is cut into wood or pressed into flour.

Sourdough, 48 hours.
Baked Monday. Only Monday.

Karla — every word a customer has to actually read: prices, hours, allergens, captions. Plain, even, and legible at the size a label forces you into.



The loaf label — one per day, the stamp doing the identifying



The six-day card. Collect all six in a month, the seventh is ours

ON THE STREET

The sign does the arguing.



The six stamps run along the bottom of the fascia in the order of the week. Somebody walking past on a Tuesday can see that there are six of them and that today is the second — which is a question, and a question is what gets somebody through a door.

No chalkboard. The three rivals on Bridge Street all have one, and a chalkboard says *we decide what is special each morning*. Sé Lá says the opposite: it was decided in advance, it is the same every Tuesday, and you can plan your week around it.

Three of them will still be writing today's special on a board. You will have written yours a year in advance.

FOUR RULES

Things a member of staff can follow without ringing you.

One. The day owns the loaf.

Thursday's loaf is baked on Thursday and never on another day. If it sells out at eleven, it sold out — you do not bake a second batch and you do not move it to Friday. The scarcity *is* the product.

Two. Red is only ever the stamp.

Not the headings, not the price list, not a sale sign. The moment red means three things it stops meaning the calendar, and the whole system goes quiet.

Three. Every post names its day.

The first two words of any caption are the day and the loaf. *Déardaoin. An Cruach*. Never a photograph of bread with a sentence about passion underneath it.

Four. Nothing new gets a stamp.

Seasonal items, coffee, traybakes — none of them carry a stamp. Six stamps, forever. A seventh dilutes the set and a customer stops being able to count them.

HOW THIS FAILS

The most likely failure is you. Six weeks in, a rep offers a deal on Danish pastry, or a regular asks for Thursday's loaf on a Tuesday and you are standing there with the dough. Say yes twice and the calendar is decoration.

The second is the seventh stamp. Christmas comes, and a seventh mark seems harmless. It is not — the whole idea rests on a customer being able to hold six things in their head and notice one is missing.

WHAT THIS IS JUDGED ON

Not followers, and not how the logo feels. One number: **the ratio of your quietest baking day to your busiest.** Today, on the owner's own estimate, Tuesday runs at roughly a third of Saturday (illustrative — the till will give you the real figure). If the calendar is working, that gap narrows, because Tuesday now has something on it that cannot be had on Saturday. Check it at ninety days.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Four things, in this order.

One. Decide the six loaves before the six stamps. The stamp is the easy half; the recipe order is what you are actually committing to for a year.

Two. Commission the set from one maker, all six together, so the cutting depth matches. Roughly €240 for the six, once.

Three. Run bags and labels as one print job. Six designs, one colour, one pass — the saving is in doing it once, not in the quantity.

Four. Photograph each loaf once, on the day it is baked, on the same board in the same light. Six photographs is the entire year's content.

The point was never the bread. It was giving somebody a reason to come in on a Thursday.

Sé Lá is an invented business. It exists to show how a brand concept pack is built — three directions, one worked up, the risk stated for all three, and one idea that cannot be copied in a season. A real pack is built from the client's own street, their own numbers and their own town.