



PEOPLE AT COMMERCETOOLS

# DEI Yearbook 2024

commercetools



## A message from Chief People Officer **Roxana Dobrescu**

May 28th marks German Diversity Day by Charta der Vielfalt and commercetools is celebrating our diverse culture by putting some spotlight on those individuals who go above and beyond in creating a more inclusive place for all of us.

We have crowned our very own DEI Champions based on a vote that was open to all of our employees. The result: we identified 10 individuals from across the globe who actively shape the culture of our company and continuously fight for making this a more equitable world. I would like to shine a spotlight on two of our remarkable DEI Champions individually:



**Catherine Jones,**  
France (remote)

Here is what our employees have to say about Catherine: Catherine is a role model of diversity, equity, and inclusion. She has gone above and beyond to foster a true sense of belonging, notably by organizing a social all-hands event that brought the team closer together. Her dedication to transparent communication has transformed our workplace culture, ensuring that every team member understands the value of openness and the importance of maintaining it in our daily interactions. Her actions have not only strengthened our team's unity but also set a high standard for what it means to actively contribute to a more inclusive and transparent environment. She embodies the values of commercetools and stands as a model of commitment and impact in promoting a better workplace for all.



**Marc Stracuzza,**  
Durham

Here is what our employees have to say about Marc: Marc is a huge culture carrier for commercetools and lives and breathes DEI. His personal involvement is an eye-opener to all of us. Marc's actions, words and heart consistently drive the message of diversity forward at our company. He understands diversity on a deep level not only practices it at work but at home and in the activities in he chooses to participate. He puts his heart into driving the employee resource group "Open Minds" and therefore enables all of us to have honest and open dialogue, thereby growing together and becoming stronger.

These are just 2 examples out of 10 highly compelling stories of individuals who chose to actively contribute. One trait our DEI Champions have in common is empathy. Empathy for bringing diverse people together, actively listening and thereby breaking barriers. Let's embrace our DEI Champions and learn from all of them.

As a company that was founded in Munich, Germany we are proud to be an active member of the community of the Charta der Vielfalt, a corporate initiative that is supported by more than 5000 companies totaling 14.7 million employees globally.

Let's celebrate our DEI Champions today and continuously support the enthusiasm for creating a more inclusive world.

My best,  
Roxana Dobrescu





# SASKIA GENNRICH

## SCALA BACKEND ENGINEER

### How long have you been with commercetools?

1 year, 4 months.

### Which country are you from?

Germany.

### Where are you currently based?

Berlin, Germany.

### What should your colleagues know about you?

I'm passionate for acquiring hobbies like an old lady acquiring cats. Have I tried dozens of different sports? Yes. Am I any good at any? Not really. Do I have soldering equipment like a repair shop? Yes. Do I have a cupboard of shame with lots of destroyed electronics? Also yes. Do I have a shelf full of different language learning books? Yes. Do I speak any conversationally? No.

Also, you don't need to be any good at your hobbies to enjoy them.

### What does diversity mean to you?

On a very simple level it is coming into a room and not just seeing a group full of white men.

### What are you most grateful for in life?

I have supportive family and friends I can rely on. I have the privilege to be who I want to be.

### If you could walk in the shoes of someone you admire for a day, who would it be?

I basically admire every trans person who puts themselves out there in politics (Tessa Ganserer, Nyke Slawik), on YouTube (contrapoints, Mia Mulder) and so many on Tiktok putting up with a lot of hate speech and still trying to educate people. To be honest, I don't want to walk in their shoes, but I am very grateful for them

### What is the one thing that the world needs to be a better place?

Let's just appreciate for now that the german parliament on April 12 passed the Selbstbestimmungsgesetz SBGG after decades of fighting for it — which has already made the world a better place.







## Recipe Time!

# Pasta Pomodoro (or something like that)

### INGREDIENTS

Pasta of choice

Cherry tomatoes

Basil

Parmegiano Reggiano (or whatever hard cheese you like)

Olive oil, garlic (optional)

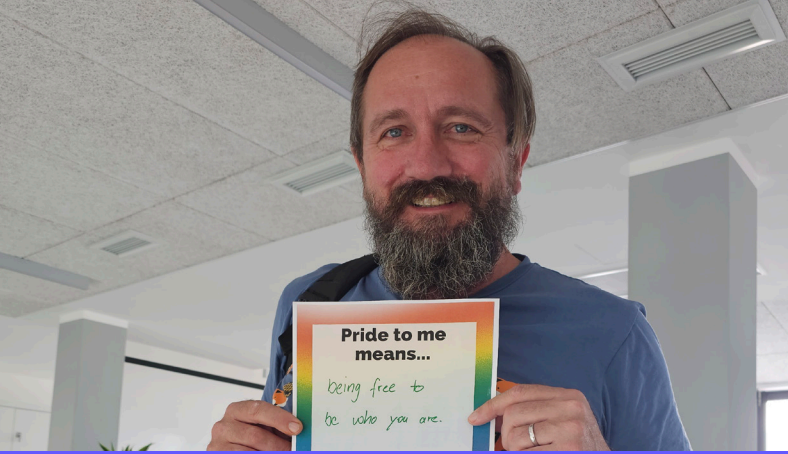
### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Start cooking pasta in a pot. Season water properly
2. Drizzle some olive oil in a medium hot pan, so that it lightly covers the pan and put the cherry tomatoes in. If you want you can half them before, you can do that. Wait until some of them start bursting
3. Now would be the time to put in the garlic if you want.
4. Season with pepper and maybe salt. There will be salt from the water and cheese later
5. When the pasta is al-dente and the tomatoes have given off their juices and formed a bit of a sauce in the pan, you can transfer the pasta directly into the pan. Save some of the pasta water. You can also smash the tomatoes a bit.
6. Give it a good tossy-toss so everything gets to know each other in the pan. Also add the cheese and ripped or sliced basil and adjust with some pasta water so you get the desired consistency
7. Garnish with pepper, cheese and basil to your liking.

### Why did you choose this recipe?

I got this recipe from Kenji Lopez-Alt off of YouTube. This is one of his first POV follow-along cooking videos. I think it is about the simplicity of the dish and how fast it comes together. It's basically just the time it takes to cook the pasta. When I cook for myself it needs to be fast, in contrast to when I cook for others (then it can get very elaborate). It's also easily adjustable. Substitute the cheese with some nutritional yeast and it's vegan. Make it Korean-inspired with some gochugaru and fish sauce. Or instead of oil, cook some bacon in the pan before. It can be what you want it to be.





# BRIAN TOMKINS

## CUSTOMER SUPPORT PROBLEM ANALYST

**How long have you been with commercetools?**

5 years.

**Which country are you from?**

Australia.

**Where are you currently based?**

Berlin, Germany.

**What should your colleagues know about you?**

Being Social. Enjoying each moment.

**What does diversity mean to you?**

Accepting people as they are, valuing their differences.

**What are you most grateful for in life?**

My ability to make meaningful connections.

**If you could walk in the shoes of someone you admire for a day, who would it be?**

I don't have any heroes. I try to walk in the shoes of everyone I meet. There is always something to learn or a new perspective to experience.

**What is the one thing that the world needs to be a better place?**

Acceptance.



## Recipe Time!

# Three cheese lasagne

### INGREDIENTS

Mozarella

---

Ricotta

---

Parmigiana

---

Pasta sheets

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Bolognese

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Bechamel sauce

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### INSTRUCTIONS

Mine is different every time.

1. Don't hold back on the cheese especially the ricotta
2. Always make more bechamel sauce than you think.

### Why did you choose this recipe?

It feeds a crowd, its hard to go wrong and it taste better the next day.







# MICHAEL ASHE

## SUPPORT ENGINEER

### How long have you been with commercetools?

5 years.

### Which country are you from?

United States.

### Where are you currently based?

Raleigh, NC.

### What should your colleagues know about you?

My colleagues should know that I'm a pretty down-to-earth person that tries to live a simple life on purpose. I'm passionate about making sure my wife and 3 children are happy and that they all have the lives they deserve. As for talents that I'm most proud of, I guess I'd say that I can do a pretty good Shredder voice for my 7 year old son when he wants to play with his Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles toys. My values correlate directly with my faith. "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," puts it rather simply.

### What does diversity mean to you?

Diversity, by definition, is variety. Following that train of thought, diversity in the workplace means that the people you work with should represent a variety of races, beliefs, and so on. The workplace shouldn't be diverse just to check off a box, but should value and embrace this variety. Variety is the spice of life.

### What are you most grateful for in life?

I'm most grateful for my family for sure. They are an amazing blessing to me and I'm super thankful to have them in my life. I'll also add that I'm grateful for the support team I get to work with. I can't believe I get to interact with such incredibly smart and genuinely good people every work day.

### If you could walk in the shoes of someone you admire for a day, who would it be?

Either Benjamin Banneker or Jack Kirby. Both were genius inventors but in different ways. I think it would've been cool to have hung out with them in their workspaces, just to see them in their element. I'm sure I would've learned something interesting whether it be how to build a clock out of wood (Banneker) or how to create legendary superhero characters (Kirby).

### What is the one thing that the world needs to be a better place?

It's hard to narrow it down to one thing, but we could all afford to be a bit more compassionate.





## Recipe Time!

# Brioche French Toast

### INGREDIENTS

1 ½ cups milk

4 large eggs

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1 teaspoon white sugar

½ teaspoon ground nutmeg

1 pinch salt

1 tablespoon butter, divided, or more as needed

6 slices dry brioche bread

¼ cup butter

powdered sugar (optional)

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Whisk the eggs in a low shallow dish. Add the milk, sugar, vanilla extract, nutmeg, and salt then whisk again until well combined
2. Add 1 tablespoon butter to a 12-inch to 14-inch skillet and place over MEDIUM heat
3. Meanwhile, place one slice of brioche into the egg mixture and turn to coat both sides (Don't oversaturate because they end up soggy). When butter has melted and begins to foam, add the coated brioche
4. Dip and transfer as many pieces of brioche that will comfortably fit in the pan without touching. Cook for 3 to 4 minutes or until golden brown and then flip the bread and cook for another 3 to 4 minutes on the other side
5. Transfer the French toast to a platter and keep warm
6. Wipe down the skillet with a paper towel and repeat the process with remaining butter, bread, and egg mixture
7. Serve immediately with syrup (your choice) and/or sprinkle some powdered sugar (if you want to get fancy) over toast .

### Why did you choose this recipe?

My wife loves it.







# MARC STRACUZZA

## DIRECTOR OF PORTFOLIO STRATEGY

### How long have you been with commercetools?

4 years.

### Which country are you from?

United States.

### Where are you currently based?

Cary, North Carolina.

### What should your colleagues know about you?

I've got a wonderful loving family comprising of my wife, two kids, dog, and a cat. I find joy in playing sports (especially soccer), singing, and eating good food. I believe in being honest, supporting those you love, and trying to continue to evolve as a person.

### What does diversity mean to you?

To me, diversity means supporting each individual towards being empowered to be their best self. It means listening to others, growing your personal empathy, and taking action whenever possible.

### What are you most grateful for in life?

I'm most grateful that I grew up in a loving and supportive household where my parents told me they loved me and that they were proud of me.

### If you could walk in the shoes of someone you admire for a day, who would it be?

Wow, its hard for me to come up with just one. How about Michael Jordan when he was playing for the Bulls, or Lionel Messi during the World Cup run, or Barak Obama when he was president. I cheated and picked three.

### What is the one thing that the world needs to be a better place?

To be a better place, we all need to take more time to listen and learn from each other so we can break through our biases and respect every person for who they are.





## Recipe Time!

# Beef Stew

### INGREDIENTS

chuck roast (~4 lbs)

carrots (4-5)

celery (3-4 stalks)

1 onion

garlic (~3 cloves)

small potatoes

mushrooms

frozen peas

red wine (1/2 a bottle)

chicken broth (3-4 cups)

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Chop chuck roast into cubes,
2. Peel and chop carrots, chop celery, dice onion, mince garlic, spices (salt, pepper, oregano, basil, bay leaves, parsley)
3. Preheat oven to 350
4. Add oil to Dutch oven
5. Over medium-high heat brown beef cubes (might need to do in several batches) and remove from Dutch oven
6. Add onion and garlic into Dutch oven and cook until onion starts to turn transparent
7. Add onion and celery into pot
8. Mix and cook for a few minutes
9. Add in chicken broth, red wine, beef cubes and spices
10. Ensure there is enough liquid to cover all the ingredients (you can always add more wine)
11. Cover Dutch oven and transfer to the preheated oven
12. Cook for 90 min
13. Add mushrooms and potatoes into Dutch oven
14. Cook for 60 minutes
15. Remove pot from oven
16. Add frozen peas and stir
17. Serve with warm bread or over rice.

### Why did you choose this recipe?

For me, this is comfort food. It's just the thing to have on a cold day or if you just need some warm cozies. Plus, it feeds a large group so you can share with friends and family.





# STEPHANIE FORBES

## DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION MANAGER

### How long have you been with commercetools?

2 years 10 months.

### Which country are you from?

United States.

### Where are you currently based?

Office: Durham, NC;  
Home: Mebane, NC.

### What should your colleagues know about you?

I am passionate about understanding people's life experiences and how those experiences have shaped their journeys. One thing I take pride in is my ability to sing. My manifesto centers around being true to ourselves to create genuine connections, make progress, and ultimately achieve success. It emphasizes the importance of defining personal or corporate values, pursuing desired outcomes, and remembering to enjoy life to the fullest.

### What does diversity mean to you?

Diversity includes diversity of thought, ideas, and ways of approaching challenges. It's about creating a rich tapestry of people who can learn from each other, collaborate effectively, and contribute to a more inclusive and innovative culture.

### What are you most grateful for in life?

My family especially my two adult son's Caleb and Joshua Forbes.

### If you could walk in the shoes of someone you admire for a day, who would it be?

Stacey Abrams has made a vow to be the person who opens the gates for those told they don't belong. Through stepping into her shoes, I would learn to embrace ambition assertively, allowing myself to learn from mistakes while also comprehending the mistakes of others with a clear and honest mindset. This experience would deepen my understanding of my goals, clarifying why they are essential and driving me to pursue them with unwavering determination.

### What is the one thing that the world needs to be a better place?

Empathy is a fundamental quality that the world needs to be a better place. It involves understanding, sharing, and resonating with the feelings and experiences of others. With empathy, individuals and societies can bridge divides, foster understanding, and cultivate compassion, leading to more inclusive and harmonious relationships. It enables us to see beyond our own perspectives, appreciate diversity, and work together to address challenges and create positive change.







## Recipe Time!

# Red Velvet Cake

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 Tablespoons unsweetened, cocoa powder
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup vegetable oil or canola
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1-2 oz. red food coloring, more or less depending on how deep you want the color
- 1/2 cup plain hot coffee, prepared **(don't skip this ingredient)**
- 1 teaspoon white distilled vinegar

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 325 F
2. Generously grease and flour (2) 9-inch round cake pans. Set aside
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking soda, baking powder, cocoa powder, and salt. Set aside
4. In a large bowl, combine the sugar and vegetable oil
5. Mix in the eggs, buttermilk, vanilla, and red food coloring until combined
6. Stir in the coffee and white vinegar
7. Combine the wet ingredients with the dry ingredients a little at a time, mixing after each addition, just until combined. (Batter will be thin)
8. Pour the batter evenly into each pan
9. Bake in the middle rack for 30-40 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out with moist crumbs clinging to it. Do not overbake as the cake will continue to cook as it cools
10. Let pans cool on a cooling rack until the pans are warm to the touch
11. Slide a knife or offset spatula around the inside of the pans to loosen the cake from the pan
12. Gently remove the cakes from the pan and let them finish cooling. (The warm cake will be very delicate)
13. Frost the cake with cream cheese frosting when the cakes have cooled completely.

### Why did you choose this recipe?

I chose this Red Velvet Recipe because it is my absolute favorite dessert.







# TOBIAS SCHLITT

PRINCIPAL ENGINEER COMMERCETOOLS FRONTEND

**How long have you been with commercetools?**

Depends how you see it: 2 years, 4 months with commercetools. Before that, 5 years with Frontastic.

**Which country are you from?**

Germany.

**Where are you currently based?**

Dinslaken, Germany.

**What should your colleagues know about you?**

I'm usually the clown and often the leader in a group, even though I suffer from depression and anxiety disorder (and yes, these are not mutually exclusive). I'm a home automation nerd and a beer enthusiast. If you want to start a conversation with me, discussing sci-fi and fantasy literature is a great way to do it.

**What does diversity mean to you?**

Diversity means allowing everyone to be themselves and trying not to judge people based solely on parts of their attributes. Increasing diversity involves bringing together people who differ in a wide range of personal attributes and allowing them to work together in peace and personal freedom.

**What are you most grateful for in life?**

Phew, there are many things: that my parents pushed me to finish school and then allowed me to excel in the area of my strength. I'm grateful for my amazing wife who just loves me as I am and accepts all of my quirks and struggles. I'm thankful for how privileged we are to live our lives and that we have an awesome kid (even though he sometimes manages to annoy the hell out of me).

**If you could walk in the shoes of someone you admire for a day, who would it be?**

I'm not a real fan-person. But I would really like to peek into the lives of some famous nerds, for example, Dr. Katherine Calvin (chief scientist at NASA). I'm pretty sure I would learn a lot about rocket science and how large science projects work.

**What is the one thing that the world needs to be a better place?**

Empathy. If people tried to understand each other more, we could solve many issues.





## Recipe Time!

# quick Thai-inspired noodles with veggies

### INGREDIENTS

300-500g chopped vegetables of your choice (fresh or deep frozen)

1-2 chopped chillies

250g (raw weight) mie noodles

Sesame oil for frying

#### Sauce

65g maple syrup (or other sweet syrup)

125ml soy sauce

2 tbsp tomato puree

1 tbsp ketchup

4 cloves garlic

1 small onion

juice of half a lemon

1 tsp ginger powder

1/2 tsp turmeric

1 tsp cumin

1/2 tsp ground coriander

2 tsp curry powder

a pinch of salt

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat the wok with oil
2. Cook the Mie noodles according to the instructions
3. Fry the vegetables in the wok until hot, but not too soft
4. Puree all the ingredients for the sauce well in a blender
5. Drain the noodles and add to the vegetables in the wok
6. Add the sauce to the wok
7. Stir everything well
8. Simmer for a further 2-3 minutes
9. Enjoy.

### Why did you choose this recipe?

I like it because it's easy to cook and ready in no time. It's also vegan yet still very umami, which I find lacking in many vegan dishes.







# ALEXANDRA IONESCU

HEAD OF ENGINEERING AT COMMERCETOOLS FRONTEND

**How long have you been with commercetools?**

2 years and 4 months.

**Which country are you from?**

Romania.

**Where are you currently based?**

Serra, Valencia.

**What should your colleagues know about you?**

I've visited around 85-90% of the European countries (I really like to travel!), I love animals (I have both dogs and Mainecoon cats), I used to be a triathlete before I took an arrow to my ankle (!) and I really recharge with positive energy, especially when I work in local communities (animal shelters, preserving nature, helping out in elder care homes).

**What does diversity mean to you?**

For me, it's a constant practice and behavior that I incorporate daily in my life through various mediums (at work or what media I consume, books, etc), to involve people from different backgrounds, cultures, religions, genders, sexual orientations, etc., while making sure everyone has a voice and same rights as others.

**What are you most grateful for in life?**

I'm grateful for many things, so hard to point only one. So, I'll share a few things that come to mind right now: That I have good parents who taught me good morals and principles, and raised me as well as they could in a very difficult environment. That, despite all problems faced living abroad, I have not given up my kindness, openness and empathy to people, while being grateful for all the awesome managers and people who guided me on my path.

**If you could walk in the shoes of someone you admire for a day, who would it be?**

My parents really struggled in a difficult environment, but they still helped, loved and nurtured each other, despite all the hardships thrown their way.

**What is the one thing that the world needs to be a better place?**

I'd say for sure more empathy and openness.







## Recipe Time!

# Okra stew

### INGREDIENTS

Okras: 500 g

1 medium onion (dry)

1 medium red bell pepper

If you want, but can be skipped:  
meat (chicken, beef) 500g

tomato sauce 5-6 big spoons

1 flour spoon

Dill, salt, dry pepper (black or mix)

cilantro, olive oil (however much  
you want)

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. You pan fry with a bit of oil the okras for about 5 minutes
2. Separately, you cut the onion, pepper and you put them in the same pot with the okras and stir them together, for about 3-4 mins
3. After this is done, you add water in the pan, the amount needed is just to cover the okras a bit. You can start mixing them together with a wooden spoon, but not too fast, so the okras don't disintegrate
4. If you add meat, you have to pan fry it before the okras and then boil the meat together with the okras
5. When you can stick the fork easily in an okra (without destroy it), you can add the tomato sauce which was mixed with the spoon of flour and add it to the pan with the stew, while mixing gently. You can leave them to simmer down for another 2-3 mins
6. At the end, you can the salt, dry pepper, dill and cilantro. Best to serve warm/hot, together with home made bread or on it's own
7. Bon Appétit!

### Why did you choose this recipe?

One of my favorite dishes since I was a child, a dish that comes from my great-grandparents, that has so many influences and it's so easy to make, and yet so full of flavors.





# LAURA LUIZ ESCORIZA

## HEAD OF ENGINEERING FOR PIM

### How long have you been with commercetools?

11 years.

### Which country are you from?

Spain.

### Where are you currently based?

Barcelona.

### What should your colleagues know about you?

I tend to be pretty quiet most of the time, but once someone brings up a topic I'm passionate about, I can't seem to stop talking! My favorite conversations usually revolve around society. I make an effort to take a step back and look at the bigger picture, asking myself, "Why is it like this?" I strive to let go of any preconceived notions, biases or constraints that might cloud my perspective. Instead, I envision what a fairer, more just society could look like. Starting from that ideal, I think about practical steps we can take to move closer to this.

### What does diversity mean to you?

To me, diversity means that every individual, regardless of their identity, have same rights, visibility, empowerment, responsibility and participation in all spheres of public and private life. Achieving this also ensures that every collective becomes represented in all aspects that shape our current and future society, leaving nobody out.

### What are you most grateful for in life?

The people I've met in every stage of my life. I've always felt like I've been surrounded by extraordinary people, and they have appeared in my life in the moment I needed them the most, giving me the chance to learn immensely from them.

### If you could walk in the shoes of someone you admire for a day, who would it be?

I'm not so interested in walking in the shoes of somebody I know. I would like to see the world through the eyes of somebody I don't know — somebody that is different from me in any aspect. I want to understand what it is like to be that person; what they perceive from society, how their life is and what their struggles are.

### What is the one thing that the world needs to be a better place?

Having more empathy toward people who are different than you. Since we are raised with biases and that we know just a tiny, tiny, incredibly tiny bit of the life and context of another person, we feel entitled to judge any action they take as if it were taken by us, even though we are in a completely different context.





## Recipe Time!

# Esqueixada

### INGREDIENTS

Dry and salted cod (the loin part or similar)

tomato (the meaty type)

olive oil (the very good one!)

black pepper

### Optional

some black olives (the wrinkled type)

a bit of onion (the one for salads) to add some different textures to the dish.

### INSTRUCTIONS

Soak the cod in water in the fridge to remove the salt, changing the water daily. Depending on the size and shape, it may take several days to reach the desired level of saltiness. Simply taste it until it suits your preference. Once it's ready, let's prepare the dish! Start by removing the skin from the cod with a knife. Then, using your hands, break the cod into small pieces by pulling the meat apart (avoid using a knife, as we want the cod to have a more porous texture to absorb the ingredients). Next, grate the tomato to separate the pulp from the skin, and if necessary, strain out any excess water. Now, combine the cod and tomato pulp in a bowl, add some freshly ground pepper and olive oil, and mix vigorously until the tomato water and oil form an emulsion. Finally, serve the mixture on a plate, topping it with black olives and some thinly sliced onion, and finish with a drizzle of olive oil.

### Why did you choose this recipe?

I love eating esqueixada, and it's a very simple dish to prepare, very fresh and tasty for hot summer days. The society we live in, forces us to be under stress and in constant need of time, and we end up neglecting either our nutrition or our taste buds. We urgently need a change in society to allocate time for caring about ourselves, about others and about our environment. Meanwhile, we need recipes like this one to stay healthy and sane.







# CATHERINE JONES

SENIOR PRODUCT MANAGER FOR COMMERCETOOLS FRONTEND STUDIO

**How long have you been with commercetools?**

4.5 years (including time at Frontastic).

**Which country are you from?**

New Zealand.

**Where are you currently based?**

France.

**What should your colleagues know about you?**

I'm passionate about the environment and doing my part to reduce our impact on it (growing our own food, buying direct from local farms and businesses, repairing instead of buying new, upcycling, sharing knowledge, reducing waste, and so on). I'm passionate about people and culture and learning from everyone. I'm passionate about being an ally to everyone who needs one.

**What does diversity mean to you?**

Diversity is to be human. Every single person is different, and it's those differences that make us better together.

**What are you most grateful for in life?**

I'm most grateful for the chances I've been given. I was lucky enough to be born in a country where there were many opportunities and to parents

who were supportive and accepting. Because of this, I've been able to choose to do things that not everyone has an opportunity to do just because of the country they were born in. It's so unfair that someone's choices can be so limited just because of something they have no choice over, it's all chance. And I'm grateful that I've been able to make the choices I've made.

**If you could walk in the shoes of someone you admire for a day, who would it be?**

There are too many to choose from and too much to learn: Greta Thunberg, Michelle Obama, Serena Williams, Dolly Parton, Beyonce, Taylor Swift, Jennifer Lopez, Kamala Harris, Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez, Jane Goodall, Mansi Gupta, and so many more...

**What is the one thing that the world needs to be a better place?**

Equality.





## Recipe Time!

# Walnut Pie

### INGREDIENTS

#### Pastry:

115 g / 1 cup of chestnut flour (can be plain white flour instead)

75g / ⅓ cup butter (lightly salted)

50 g / ¼ cup of caster sugar

1 egg yolk

1 tbsp water

#### Filling:

100g / ½ cup butter (lightly salted)

100 g / ½ cup raw sugar (or brown sugar)

3 eggs

3 tbsp honey

200 g / 2 cups walnuts

### INSTRUCTIONS

#### Make the pastry

1. Add the chestnut flour to a mixing bowl. Cut the butter into small pieces, dropping it into the flour as you go
2. Rub the butter into the flour with your fingertips until it resembles coarse breadcrumbs
3. Stir in the sugar, followed by the egg yolk and the water if the mixture seems too dry
4. Mix quickly to a stiff dough using a round-bladed table knife. Turn out onto a lightly floured board and knead lightly until smooth, then shape into a rectangular block
5. Wrap in a greaseproof wrap (I use beeswax wrappers) and chill for 30 minutes. Wait to start the next step until the pastry has chilled
6. Preheat the oven to 190°C / 375°F
7. On a lightly floured board, roll out the pastry and lift it into a 20cm / 8 in shallow tart dish (or you can make individual size pies)
8. Put greaseproof baking wrap or paper into the pastry case and fill with dry chickpeas or place another dish on top to blind bake to the pastry. Place in the oven for 15 minutes (if making individual-size pies, for 10 minutes)
9. Remove the baking wrap and what you've used to blind bake, and return the pastry to the oven for 5 minutes. Then cool on a rack
10. Reduce the oven temperature to 180°C / 350°F.

### **Make the filling**

1. Cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add the eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition. Stir in the honey and walnuts
2. Pour the filling onto the cooked pastry base. Return to the oven and bake for a further 30 minutes or until the filling is set (individual size pies are around 20 minutes)
3. Let cool a little, and serve with vanilla bean ice cream.

### **Why did you choose this recipe?**

It's my own take on a recipe from a New Zealand cookbook that every New Zealander owns. I remember making things from an old version my mum had when I was young. So every time I make something from the book, I think of home. I changed the recipe as we now have a farm with a lot of walnut trees, and we didn't know what to do with them. So I tried making a pecan pie recipe with walnuts, and it was nice but it could be improved. So I tweaked the recipe until it was really good. It's best when it's with chestnut flour, but white flour can be used. I only use local ingredients (apart from the sugar), which all come from either our village or the next one over. The walnuts, eggs, and honey all come from our farm.







# FULTON BYRNE

## ENGINEERING MANAGER

**How long have you been with commercetools?**

5 years.

**Which country are you from?**

USA.

**Where are you currently based?**

Durham, NC.

**What should your colleagues know about you?**

The most fun I've ever had was cycling across the northern US from Portsmouth, NH to Vancouver, B.C. with 30 or so other strangers who became friends.

**What does diversity mean to you?**

Diversity to me is really just an awareness of the experience of others and a strong respect for each others' experiences.

Diversity is also the joy of discovery. New ideas, new perspectives, etc. I would die if I had to listen to the same song over and over again my whole life. I like a rich playlist.

**What are you most grateful for in life?**

Family.

**If you could walk in the shoes of someone you admire for a day, who would it be?**

Baruch Spinoza. I've been really interested in his philosophy and life recently. I think I would learn how to think more thoughtfully, but also what it was like to struggle against the dominant influences of his day.

**What is the one thing that the world needs to be a better place?**

Curiosity.



## Recipe Time!

# Chocolate Meringue Pie

### INGREDIENTS

Sugar

Cocoa Powder. Use a baking cocoa

Cornstarch

Salt

Egg Yolks

Milk. Whole milk

Vanilla

Pie Crust

### Meringue Ingredients

Egg Whites. These are leftover from the pie filling, make sure there is no yolk in the whites!

Sugar

Salt

Vainilla

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. How To Make Chocolate Meringue Pie
2. Mix together sugar, cocoa, cornstarch and salt in a medium size sauce pan
3. Add in milk and bring mixture to a boil. Boil for 1 minute.
4. Whisk egg yolks together in a small bowl
5. Add small amount of hot milk mixture into eggs, stirring as you add. You do not want to cook the eggs
6. Pour egg/milk mixture into saucepan with remaining milk mixture
7. Over medium heat, stir constantly for about 3 minutes or until thickened
8. Remove from heat and add in vanilla, chocolate chips and butter and stir until melted
9. Pour mixture into baked pie crust. Add meringue layer while filling is still hot
10. How To Make Meringue For Pie
11. Beat egg whites and pinch of salt until stiff peaks form with an electric mixer
12. Slowly add in the sugar and vanilla
13. Spoon meringue over the top of the hot filling. Be sure meringue covers the entire surface and is sealed around the edges. No filling should show!

From: <https://www.yourhomebasedmom.com/chocolate-meringue-pie/>

### Why did you choose this recipe?

When I would visit my Grandmother's with my cousin we would always go to a local all you can eat buffet in her small town. They had a pie closet that always had slices of these pies. I think either my cousin or I ate 14 slices in one sitting. That's probably an embellishment, but the pie is delicious.



# Congratulations to all 2024 DEI Champions

In case of questions on this yearbook or in  
general, please feel free to reach out to us:  
[dei@commercetools.com](mailto:dei@commercetools.com)



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DEI Yearbook  
2024