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LONDON

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This week's Time Out
in no time at all

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Hello, London

Chris Waywell
Associate Editor



'Are you doing Dry January?' 'What?' 'Dry January. Are you doing it?' 'I don't think so.' 'Still on the sauce?' 'The what?' 'The sauce. Still on the booze?' 'Yes. Sometimes. I mean, I'm not drinking right now.' 'Well, no, it's 9am. Later, though?' 'Yes. Maybe.' 'I'm not judging you.' 'Aren't you?' 'You do what you like... you're an adult.' If you're tired of the whole 'to booze or not to booze' thing at this time of year, we've got an alternative. This week we're celebrating London's most skilfully crafted, achingly delicious, alarmingly beautiful alcohol-free drinks. So if you're on the wagon, or just dry-curious, you can be an actual adult about the whole thing. Cheers!

YOU SAID IT

What you've been rating and hating online

We celebrated low-impact fitness last week, to help you ease your way towards a new 2019 you. Rishin here was down with it, literally.

'Why stand on your hands when you can laze on a bolster is what I say.'
Rishin P via Instagram

The people at Aperol announced they'd be turning Blue Monday orange with the return of their free drinks delivery service. Sara wants them to broaden their catchment area. What's a few more miles?

'OMG, please make your way to Leighton Buzzard. It's only up the M1.'
Sara B via Facebook

Fans of flatpack wardrobes and Swedish delicacies went wild upon hearing news of the swanky new Ikea that's opening in Greenwich. Aga even came up with a fantastic new dining concept.

'Free-flowing meatball brunch in Feb?'
Aga T via Facebook

A new bar in Tooting is serving everyone's favourite anxiety-attack-in-a-glass on tap! Jane's taking the concept to fresh and exciting places. Thank her later.

'Espresso martinis on tap! You bring the bourbons, this could get messy!'
Jane M via Facebook



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COMMENT OF THE WEEK

Facebook went wild for Camden's Hollywood-esque Music Walk of Fame, coming soon, with pavement plaques eventually celebrating more than 400 artists. Some of you loved the idea, some of you... uh, not so much. Claire didn't care either way – she had only one thing on her mind.
'I feel some rubbing coming on.'
Claire L via Facebook

We hope you mean the pencil-and-paper kind, Claire. Any other sort of public rubbing could lead to a stint in a cell (even in Camden). And we wouldn't want that start to the new year for one of our readers! If you can't be good, for God's sake be careful.

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*Easier to digest for those who may have gastro-intestinal discomfort caused by lactose intake. Vit B12 contributes to the reduction of tiredness and fatigue. Calcium is needed for the maintenance of normal bones. Protein contributes to growth in muscle mass.

City life

Edited by James Manning
@timeoutlondon

Stanfords is on the move

EVER NEEDED A fresh start – to broaden your horizons, open new doors, begin a new chapter... but didn't feel like straying too far from home? It seems Stanfords, the travel bookshop in Covent Garden, shares the same sentiment: after more than a century on Long Acre, and facing a hike in its rent, it's just relocated to a new site around the corner. The much-loved emporium claims to stock the world's largest selection of maps, globes and travel books. Captain Scott, Florence Nightingale and the British Army have been customers; it has even helped out James Bond and Sherlock Holmes. Now it has officially opened its new digs at 7 Mercer Walk, complete with updated versions of its famous map-print floors and excellent café. We'll miss the old shop, but it's great to have a new spot for hours of wanderlust-inducing guidebook-browsing. Your 2019 travel goals start here. ■ *Claire Wong*
→ www.stanfords.co.uk



THE ESSENTIALS

Three things you have to do this week



See this

If you enjoy your coffee with a side of geekery, head down to the new **Roasting Plant** in Borough to watch coffee beans roasted before your eyes by a Willy Wonka-esque machine called Javabot.



Drink this

The **World's Best Martini Challenge** is back to crown this year's champion mixer. Get yourself to Soho tonight to try martinis, meet London's best bartenders and say bye-bye to Dry January.



Eat this

Champion street food team **BBQ Dreamz** is taking the reins at Meat Liquor King's Cross every Sunday until mid-February. Treat yourself to a ten-course tasting menu full of Filipino flavours.

Discover more cool things to do at timeout.com/news



THE VIEW FROM YOU

What Time Out Tastemakers have been Instagramming this week



@leightravers

'The skyline from Muswell Hill is quite something.'



@susannahfields

'The Willis building, where Sean Scully's sculpture "Stack Blues" sits.'



@eastlndgirl_foodieblog

'Tandoor lamb chops marinated for 24 hours at @lokhandwala_uk.'



@eatnlondon

'Another day, another new vegan café in London: Kalifornia Kitchen.'



@rattyboom

'@pastaiolondon is indeed the king of fresh, al dente street food pasta!'



@ampan2

'@zabouartist has brought one of my favourite actor's characters to life!'

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MY LONDON STORY

A love of numbers propelled Bobby Seagull from school in Forest Gate to a City job and 'University Challenge'. Now he's trying to use what he's learned to help others

'I'm fighting to get Britain to love maths'

I GREW UP in East Ham and went to school in the late '90s in Forest Gate. It had its challenges, but maths was comforting – if I had a bad day, ran out of milk or got mugged, eight times seven would always be 56.

I was fortunate enough to grow up with thousands of books at home. I owe my dad a lot for my love of learning. He loved the book 'Jonathan Livingston Seagull' and gave me and my three brothers the surname 'Seagull'. Every Saturday after lunch, we would head to East Ham Library and sprawl on the floor for hours reading books on everything from Victorian engineers to economics to the cities of the world. My dad would do some work before we'd head back for the football scores.

In 2000, after spotting an ad in *The Times*, I won a scholarship to sixth form at Eton. Although I was a state-school student from Newham, I was unfazed about not fitting in – I felt like I'd earned my right to be there. My fellow students believed that they could get to the top of whatever field they entered. It instilled a belief in me that I could make an impact too.

By my early twenties, I was mostly preoccupied with making a lot of money and planning to retire to the Bahamas. I worked as a City trader and later as a chartered accountant for five years. I could buy a nice watch or a suit whenever I wanted. But after a while, I realised that it didn't give me the self-worth that helping others did.

Towards the end of my time as an accountant, I found myself training new graduates. I enjoyed doing that so much more than the corporate world. So I took the plunge, did a PGCE then an MA in education at Cambridge, and started teaching.

Working in state schools across London has given me a deeper appreciation of the often thankless efforts of teachers.



I currently teach back in Newham and I try to make my lessons interesting: once I put on an instrumental track by Drake and performed a maths-based rap to engage a class, which went down well! State-school kids are often stereotyped as not wanting to work hard, go to uni and have good careers, but I've found that their optimism is infectious.

In 2016, I won a place as captain of my college's 'University Challenge' team. It was surreal: I remembered watching the programme growing up, hiding behind the sofa in awe at the students who seemed to have so much knowledge. We made it to the semi-finals before getting knocked out. But I was completely unprepared for the positive response to my TV appearances. I remember going into school the next morning and one of my students running up to me, flashing their phone and saying, 'Mr Seagull, you're going viral!' I was described by the BBC as 'the happiest contestant ever', and the experience ended up completely changing my life. I realised I could fight to get Britain to love maths as much as I did.

Half of adults in the UK have the numeracy skills of an 11-year-old, and yet more funding in last year's Budget was allocated to potholes than to primary schools. It's been so rewarding to see the impact I've had on the kids I teach in London. Now I'm excited to devote the rest of my life to spreading that mission to the whole nation. ■

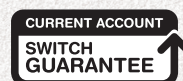
Interview by Salma Haidrani

→ 'The Life-Changing Magic of Numbers' by Bobby Seagull is published by Virgin Books.

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You'll find three of the world's best museums in posh old SW7 – and that's not all. Get the inside track with local tips from Time Out Tastemakers

→ ⇄ South Kensington. www.timeout.com/southken



BEST CHEAP EAT

'**Oriental Canteen** for good, cheap Chinese food.' *Paula Kanesanathan*

'**La Cave à Fromage** prepares the best cheese sandwiches in all London.' *Lise Mathon*

'**Squirrel!** Healthy, huge salads and great soups in recyclable takeaway bowls.' *Natalie Manni*

BEST DINNER

'Hands down, **Rocca**. It's got a homey vibe and the pizza and pasta is legit.' *LeeLee Seah*

'**Comptoir Libanais** for fab Lebanese food.' *Paula Kanesanathan*

'**Gu Yuan** is a total insider secret for the best Chinese banquet.' *Angela Lau*

'I love **The Kensington Creperie** for authentic crêpes and savoury galettes.' *Edelyn Brawidjojo*

'**Daquise** for authentic Polish food in a charming little restaurant. The pierogi are a must-have. Make sure you reserve a table!' *Chelsey Campbell*

BEST PUB

'**The Queens Arms** is a superb little hidden pub in a mews and does great pub grub.' *Gemma Harris*

'**The Anglesea Arms** for good food and a buzzy atmosphere!' *Ioanna Laskari*

BEST BAR

'Beneath Wright Brothers there's a beautiful and sultry cocktail bar, **The Mermaid**.' *Georgie Pursey*

BEST THING TO DO

'Go and feel old in the **Science Museum**, seeing exhibits that were futuristic when you were young and are now museum pieces!' *Julie Ramsden*

'Take a behind-the-scenes spirit collection tour at the **Natural History Museum**.' *Laura Brett*

'Take a class at **Divertimenti Cookery School** – whether it's patisserie or Middle Eastern food, canapés or ideas for leftovers. The cookshop is an absolute treasure trove too.' *Alexandra Boyle*

BEST PLACE TO SHOP

'**The Conran Shop** in the historic Michelin House is a haven for furniture, homeware and gifts – a great place to get lost for a while.' *Gemma Harris*

'I love **Oddono's Gelato** on Bute Street: try the bacio and pistachio gelati.' *Edelyn Brawidjojo*

BEST PLACE FOR COFFEE

'**Raison d'Etre** for a well-deserved café au lait and freshly baked croissant after visiting the Natural History Museum and V&A.' *Lise Mathon*

'**Brown & Rosie** has some amazing coffees, like a taro latte.' *Jane Glaubius*

'The **V&A Café** is the oldest museum café in the world, with stunning Victorian interiors partly designed by William Morris! It's definitely Instagram-worthy.' *Iza Kawecka*

BEST PLACE FOR A DATE

'Ice skating at the **Natural History Museum** is perfect for date night, with a beautiful backdrop and a café to grab a mulled wine after you hang up your skates.' *Gemma Harris*

'I love the **Lates** at all the museums – a great, fun and often drunken way to see the exhibits!' *Paula Kanesanathan*

BEST PLACE FOR CULTURE

'The **French Institute and Ciné Lumière** for the best of French-English cross-cultural exchange, films, festivals, concerts and talks.' *Lise Mathon*

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LONDON

MAPPED



London's top meals on wheels

GETTING DINNER DELIVERED is part of London life: our 2018 Time Out City Life Index survey revealed a third of us had ordered food online in the last week. And here's what we ordered most last year, according to exclusive data from Deliveroo. London's favourite dish overall was a Five Guys cheeseburger, but different boroughs have different tastes: Camden and Southwark are going vegan, Hounslow, Sutton and Bexley are all about fried chicken, and Bromley and Brent both crave katsu. Hungry yet? ■ **James Manning**

Academy Award® Nominee

Steve Carell

Academy Award® Nominee

Timothée Chalamet

Maura Tierney

Amy Ryan

Beau

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IN CINEMAS

City life



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“A triumph”

Little White Lies



Empire

“Steve Carell and
Timothée Chalamet
are outstanding”

The Skinny



Time Out New York

tiful Boy
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FRIDAY

15 DRUG MISUSE, PRECISENT DRUG
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WORD ON THE STREET

The most ridiculous
things we've
overheard in
London this week

THINGS YOU
**ONLY
KNOW**
IF YOU'RE A...

Vegan chef

Day Radley, 40

Every year, more non-vegans are open to giving it a go

'I've done a lot of teaching, and most people who've come to my classes aren't vegan. They're there either because their partner has brought them along or they want to increase the amount of plant-based food in their diet. There's been a shift in the number of people happy to take veganism on board part-time.'

Visuals are more important for chefs than ever

'Everything I learned in my art degree has come into play. It's helped with creating my website and photographing my food. Knowing how proportions work helps me plate food. Now is a great time for people with art degrees because the visual side of things plays such a big role in communication, especially with food.'

There aren't enough vegan chefs to cater for the demand

'Gone are the days when vegans were happy because there was something they could eat on the menu. Now vegan cuisine needs to push boundaries. I've opened an institute to

fast-track chefs in vegan cooking because I'm hearing from a lot of restaurants that they can't find the staff.'

A lot of people basically just don't know how to cook

'I've been working with a GP who's been advising patients to eat a more plant-based diet, but they say they don't know how to cook. We're at a point where we risk a whole generation not knowing how to make meals from scratch, which is scary. If I can get people throwing food together and playing with food, that's when we win over processed-food companies. Though you should always have a back-up in the freezer, just in case.' ■

Interview by Jessica Brown

→ www.veganchefday.com/the-vegan-chef-institute

'Where would you put yourself on a scale of one to euphoria?'

'Which Rob do you mean? Rob Rob? Or Rob with the face?'

'I never smell. I don't think I've got any hormones.'

'When you get home you can play with your Post-Its.'

'I just can't believe he has lived his whole life without a spatula.'

'My plant refuses to drink tap water. I have to buy bottled.'

'Do you want any croissants or are you eating that kebab when we get back home?'

'Sounds a classic case of compulsive-obsessive fur burger syndrome.'

'...although I am pretty nifty with a lobster.'

'It was so good to see you. We must catch up again before Brexit.'

Overheard any outré exchanges? Tweet us #wordonthestreet @timeoutlondon

150 Sainsbury's
Est. 1869

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for less



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[sainsburys.co.uk](https://www.sainsburys.co.uk)

FREE LONDON

Put your money away! Here are the week's best free events



LIGHT ENTERTAINMENT

Winter Lights

Missing Christmas twinkliness? Get your LED fix at Winter Lights, which will be lighting up Canary Wharf with 21 interactive light installations. Play neon hopscotch, watch animals march along the waterside and don't miss 'bit.fall' (above) which uses fancy technology to light up falling water droplets to make words from *The Times* newsfeed. It's gonna be lit.

→ Canary Wharf. ↻ Canary Wharf. Tue Jan 15-Jan 26.

I'M DOWN, DOG Baya Yoga

Make 2019 the year you can finally touch your toes by stretching it out at French yoga brand Baya's free classes. Ease yourself in with a candlelit sesh on Thursday or take things up a notch at Sunday's hiphop, intense flow class.

→ Boxpark Shoreditch.
Shoreditch High St Overground.
Thu Jan 17 and Sun Jan 20.

WORK IT OUT Blockhead Basecamp pop-up

Tick off some of those New Year's resolutions at this four-day pop-up. Try everything from HIIT workouts and running sessions to neon life-drawing and a Lego night for grown-ups, with free beer. Hopto it!

→ 82a Commercial St.
↻ Liverpool St.
Thu Jan 17-Sun Jan 20.

GET ZEN London Buddhist Centre open day

Curious about Buddhism? Learn all about it and join drop-in taster sessions on mindfulness, meditation, yoga and Buddhist practice as the LBC opens its doors for a day and invites newcomers to have a nosy round.

→ London Buddhist Centre.
↻ Bethnal Green. Sun Jan 20.

BAG THE SWAG The Big January Giveaway

Head to Carnaby Street for freebies throughout the month. This week, there are High Brow kits from Benefit up for grabs on Thursday and free chicken burgers at Whyte & Brown on Monday. Follow @CarnabyLondon for more info.

→ Various Carnaby St locations.
↻ Oxford Circus. Until Jan 31.

99 problems? Try 101 things to do at timeout.com/thingstodo

150 Sainsbury's
Est. 1869

Crumpets

50p

x8

Live well
for less



by Sainsbury's Crumpets x8, £0.50. 6.3p each. Subject to availability. Selected larger stores only.

[sainsburys.co.uk](https://www.sainsburys.co.uk)



ZERO HEROES

Forget sickly sweetness and elaborate garnishes. The mocktail is dead: London's alcohol-free cocktails are pure class. *Laura Richards* samples the best booze-free bevs. Photography *Andy Parsons*



£4

**Pink peppercorn hydrosol,
strawberry shrub, verjus, soda**

Shrubs are all the rage for 2019. And no, they've got nothing to do with topiary. A shrub is a sweet drinking vinegar, which Sager + Wilde makes all the more palatable with macerated strawberries. This intense combo joins Austrian verjus (an acidic juice made with unripe grapes) and pink peppercorn hydrosol (a non-alcoholic botanical drink distilled in the bar's own copper still). It sounds complicated but all you need to know is this: it looks like a negroni and has an in-your-face, bubblegum-ish flavour that's ideal with brunch (the bottomless kind is so 2018).

→ 250 Paradise Row. ↻ Bethnal Green.

STRAWBERRY
AT SAGER + WILDE PARADISE ROW



DRY OLD FASHIONED AT DISHOOM



£6.50 | Smoked demerara, orange bitters, applewood, cayenne, orange peel

There's nothing quite as indulgent as an old fashioned – a cocktail best made slowly and with a lot of care. So it's good to know that Dishoom staff dedicate as much energy to the Dry Old Fashioned, stirring away until it's just right. To recreate those lingering whisky flavours, they smoke brown-sugar syrup with hickory wood, while ginger juice adds a suggestive tingle. They're secretive about the rest, admitting only that in-house 'copy bitters' and 'spirit essence' are in the mix. It all combines to deliver a number as smooth and smoky as Sinatra.

→ Various locations. www.dishoom.com





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Booze-free cocktails

£6.50 | Seedlip, pineapple, raspberry, soda

This replica of a singapore sling, served at Spitalfields' Bar Three, really looks the part: it's a tall, resplendently scarlet drink. It doesn't disappoint on flavour either. Fermented raspberry and pineapple cordials work together to recreate zingy holiday flavours. And the Seedlip Spice 94 – a non-alcoholic botanical spirit – gives body and warmth. This cocktail's deservedly the most popular of three 'free' drinks available at Bar Three, although punters have been known to ask for the addition of a cheeky nip of rum in there.

→ 65a Brushfield St. ⇄ Liverpool St.

SLING

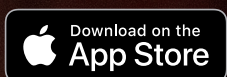
AT BAR THREE



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Up sticks.

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wherever life takes you.



Uber Eats

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£7.50 | **Plum, bay leaf,
brown sugar**

Basement bar Eve has developed drinks for a sober night out that also pair with the food in upstairs sister restaurant Frog. Plum is the most popular choice on the 'Non-Intoxicating' list, consisting of black tea infused with, you guessed it, plum, mixed with bay-leaf-infused white tea, demerara sugar syrup and soda. It's not the most visually appealing drink – a puddly, orangey-brown liquid in a wineglass – but it's dazzlingly similar to your fave vino, with background fruitiness and a tannin-heavy taste. Plus you get to dodge the red-wine hangover. Cheers to that.

→ 34 Southampton St. ⇄ Covent Garden.



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SOMETHING TIKI

AT THE BAR AT SEXY FISH

£7 | Orange juice, toasted coconut, cream, yuzu, tonka bean

Bar supervisor Nikolett Maczo was asked to make 'something tiki' for Sexy Fish's zero-booze cocktail list. There's no denying this drink's tropical charms – it's served in a mermaid glass, with a fishtail-shaped biscuit spread with Malaysian coconut jam jutting from the top. A potion of orange, yuzu, toasted coconut syrup and cream, it's a sober take on the Painkiller (rum, pineapple, cream of coconut, orange juice). Alcohol-free tonka bean bitters give a warm spice flavour that could easily be mistaken for rum – it's like having the hard stuff without getting shipwrecked.

→ Berkeley Square House, Berkeley Square. ↻ Green Park.



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Uber Eats

HOPS

AT WAESKA

£10 | Hops, rhubarb-and-red-fruit cordial,
Real Kombucha

You might associate hops with your favourite IPA, but this drink is an alcohol-free dream. The flowers here add a bitter edge to a pink and sparkling elixir. Combined with tart kombucha and rhubarb, plus sweet vanilla and a sharp grapefruit tonic top, it's like a twist on a summer spritz. A fresh rhubarb candy teeters on the top of your glass, but *you'll* still be steady on your feet after knocking back a few of these.

→ The Mandrake Hotel, 20-21 Newman St. ☎ Goodge St.





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£3.50 | **Blackcurrant, liquorice, sage**

Hackney's Every Cloud has been serving low- and no-alcohol drinks since its launch more than two years ago. Its current offering is inspired by an ice cream devoured by the bar's owner, Felix Cohen, on his holidays on the Isle of Man. It blends a malty liquorice-and-brown-sugar cordial with blackcurrant soda made by east London soft-drink producer Square Root, and is served with sage leaves perched like bunny ears on the top. The result is nicely sour, with a mild medicinal vibe: like a cough sweet, in a really good way. ■

→ 11a Morning Lane. Hackney Central Overground.

GLACIER DARK

AT EVERY CLOUD

Not completely forsworn the booze?
Head to [timeout.com/cocktails](https://www.timeout.com/cocktails)

Although the long, warm days of summer may feel like a distant memory, the arrival of winter needn't be a bad thing. As temperatures drop and nights draw in, so too come cosy evenings by the fire and the twinkling of festive lights in trees and windows across the country.

Crisp mornings sparkle under a layer of frost adorning trees and pavements alike with glittering white, and steamy clouds of breath billow from the mouths of commuters on their way to work. But as we head further into the season and the weather takes a turn, problems can arise across the rail network.

When winter weather strikes we run snow-and-ice-busting trains round the clock to keep you moving. These special trains are kitted out with anti-icing fluid, which works in a similar way to salt gritters on the road, preventing our electric rail from freezing in the first place. And they apply an adhesion gel to the tracks so that trains can get grip.

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ICE, ICE, MAYBE?

When the mercury plummets, even the lightest shower of rain or dusting of snow can freeze and become compacted on the rails, turning into dangerous ice. Not only does this freeze around the electric rail and create an insulating effect preventing trains from drawing power and being able to move with any speed – in the worst cases, it prevents them from being able to move at all.

To try to keep disruptions to your journeys to a minimum, we may have to make some changes to our timetables when bad weather hits. Some services will be less frequent, and some stations may close, but this allows us to complete all the work needed to keep you moving, albeit a little slower than usual to keep you and our staff as safe as possible.

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Breaking tabooze

Londoners are increasingly opting for low or no alcohol all year round, but is there still a stigma attached to 'I don't drink'? *Isabelle Aron* meets the drinkers leading the zero-percent revolution. Illustrations *Daniel Mitchell* →

I'VE JUST KNOCKED back my third cocktail and I've had no dinner. It might sound like I'm on track for a pounding headache come the morning but actually I don't feel remotely tipsy. I'm not bragging about my ability to handle my drink; it's because there's something significant about the espresso martinis I've had tonight – they contain no alcohol.

A few years ago, it seemed like the only time Londoners would consider giving up booze was Dry January, begrudgingly clutching a pint of lime and soda down the pub. But recently it seems we're beginning to drink less all year round. Figures from a 2018 survey carried out by the Office of National Statistics show that the number of people in England who say they've had a drink in the previous week decreased by 7 percent over the period 2007-2017. And the capital is leading the way: 27 percent of Londoners surveyed don't drink at all, which is the highest proportion of teetotalers in the country. So how did we get here? And who is embracing the booze-swerving lifestyle? The cocktail masterclass I'm at seems like a good place to start finding out.

Held in a Mayfair pop-up filled with succulents and copper lamps, the event is packed with the sort of young couples and foodie friends you might have met at a gin workshop a couple of years ago. The difference here is it's hosted by Seedlip, a drinks brand that distils spirits in a similar way to producing vodka or gin but without the alcohol. Seedlip is one of a number of booze-free and low-ABV beverage-makers that have sprung up in London in recent years. There are two craft breweries creating low- and no-alcohol beers (Small Beer Brew Co in Bermondsey and Nirvana Brewery in Leyton), while drinks like vino alternative Botonique

(from a London wine merchant) and fruity vinegar-based Shrb (made in Walthamstow) are just two of the more sophisticated soft options coming out of this city.

Seedlip founder Ben Branson says he's seen a dramatic change in the choice available to non-drinkers in the last few years. When he launched his non-alcoholic spirit in 2015, he contacted lots of London venues asking if they did booze-free cocktails and most of them didn't. 'It's come a huge way. We work with about 400 or 500 restaurants, bars and hotels in London now,' says Branson. 'I've definitely seen a change. Bartenders are more willing to offer somebody a grown-up, non-alcoholic drink that's not just blended fruit juices.'

The result is that classy alcohol-free cocktails are popping up all over London. Booze-free bar-restaurant Redemption just opened its third branch, in Seven Dials, with a fully alcohol-free cocktail bar. The Clove Club offers a 'soft pairing' tasting menu. Dandelyan and the Savoy's American Bar – the two best bars in the world (which happen to be in London) – are both shaking up inventive alcohol-free tipples. And demand for them is high.

For sisters Aisha and Nadia Ramzan, spirits like Seedlip are game-changing.

'This opens things up for us. We don't just have to have a Coke'

They're Muslim and don't drink for religious reasons. 'We used to end up at shisha bars because that was the only thing we could do,' says Aisha. For them, the new wave of alcohol-free options is hugely welcome. 'This opens up things for us,' says Aisha. 'If people are going for drinks, we don't just have to have a Coke.'

'It's about how you feel in a social setting,' Nadia explains. 'I've always wanted to try a gin and tonic. You look at it and you're like: What does that taste like? So when this [Seedlip] came out, it was very exciting.'

While Londoners like Aisha and Nadia have been teetotal their whole lives, there's been a broader shift in drinking culture. It used to be that not drinking was met with suspicion or concern: 'Are you pregnant?', 'Are you on antibiotics?', 'Are you *okay*?' But now it seems that there's a real thirst for non-boozy options, and that the social awkwardness around not drinking is fading.



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One explanation for this is that Londoners have become more interested in their health, from swapping beef burgers for vegan versions, to replacing nights down the pub with workouts at bougie gyms. 'People care more about their health and the quality of their food and drink now,' says Branson. Although he adds that the demand for alcohol-free options isn't just coming from fitness fans: London's appetite for unusual pop-ups, posh cinemas and immersive events is a factor, as it means going out doesn't have to revolve around the pub. 'It's not just this binary [choice of] 'Are we going out drinking or are we staying in?' anymore.'

Consequently, not drinking is appealing to a wider audience than ever before. Laura Willoughby runs Club Soda, an alcohol-free meet-up that does regular socials (such as *Queers Without Beers*), mindful pub crawls and the *Mindful Drinking Festival*. She says attendees are diverse and cross-generational: 'We get people who are changing their drinking habits, pregnant women, foodies, Muslims, people who've never had an alcoholic drink.'

Willoughby believes that people being more open about mental health is a major factor in the low-alcohol movement. 'Younger people are more in tune with the fact that alcohol makes things like anxiety worse,' she says. 'Lots of our younger members have changed their drinking habits to manage their mental health.'

It's something I hear first-hand at a Club Soda meet-up at Syrup of Soot in Bloomsbury. It's a cosy coffee shop and the place is heaving. People are queuing up to get their hands on booze-free fizz, wine and beer – there's even an alcohol-free rum and Coke. I meet Niamh McBride and Megan Davis, who are sipping zero-percent cider. Davis went to Club Soda's *Mindful Drinking Festival* this summer and is a regular at booze-free events like daytime rave *Morning Gloryville*. But she's not teetotal. 'I flip in and out. I can quite easily say "I'm not drinking tonight." It's different for McBride: 'I can't. I'm zero or 100.' They both think the focus on wellbeing has a lot to do with more people ditching booze. Davis sees it as a way to avoid some anxiety too. 'If you were sober, you wouldn't have made a twat of yourself,' she says, 'and you wouldn't have had anxiety for three days [after].'

The booze-fuelled existential crisis the morning after the night before is something that Ed Martoni hasn't ever experienced. He's a regular at Club Soda's socials and has never drunk alcohol. 'In the beginning, I felt like: Should I drink? Everyone else is,' he says. 'Part of me thought I should say that I'm allergic. But now I say I've chosen not to.' Martoni

is happy to go clubbing sober, but these socials provide a welcome booze-free space. When he discovered the monthly *Queers Without Beers*, it was a game-changer. 'So many LGBT+ socials relate to drinking,' he says. 'To have something that combines the LGBT+ spectrum and not drinking was a huge deal for me.'

Whether it's switching regular beer for the low-ABV stuff, going teetotal or exploring the city's alcohol-free cocktails, it seems that kicking the booze (or at least cutting back) is trickling into the mainstream. Gordon's has released a low-alcohol pre-mixed G&T, drinks giant Diageo is an investor in Seedlip (which is launching a new non-alcoholic aperitif brand this year) and the supermarkets are rapidly broadening their alcohol-free offering. Willoughby says that that's an indication the trend is here to stay: 'These companies wouldn't invest in it if they didn't think it was going anywhere.'

That's not to say we'll all be swapping full-strength pints for zero-percent pale ales, but in London, drinking in moderation is becoming both easier and less commented-upon. No wonder so many of us are embracing the option. I'll raise a glass to that. ■

'Part of me thought I should say that I'm allergic to alcohol'

One for the road

Going to a party but off the sauce?
Kate Lloyd picks nine creative soft drinks to take along, all made here in London. Photography *Andy Parsons*



1. Nix and Kix Cucumber Mint

Cayenne pepper brings a finishing kick to this flavoursome cucumber cooler. Addictively tasty.
 → www.nixandkix.com. £15 for 12 cans.

2. Infinite Session Pale Ale

This is arguably the beeriest alcohol-free beer available in London right now. Refreshing and full-bodied.
 → www.infinitesession.com. £37.50 for a case of 24 cans.

3. Botonique Crisp Dry White

Complex and aromatic, this wine alternative contains botanical extracts with antioxidant qualities.
 → www.botonique.com. £15 for two bottles.

4. Square Root London Margarita

This zero-percent cocktail is one of a wide range of exciting soft drinks by Square Root. Zesty and spicy.
 → store.squarerootsoda.co.uk. £1.80 a bottle.

5. Nirvana Brewery Kosmic Stout

With smoky, chocolatey flavours, this alcohol-free beer tastes like Bonfire Night, and isn't as heavy as actual stout.
 → www.nirvanabrewery.com. £2.29 a bottle.

6. Punchy 0% Spiced Rum Punch

A herby drink with chai flavours and just enough sweetness. It's like a complex ginger beer.
 → www.punchydrinks.com. £1.89 a bottle.

7. The London Essence Co Elderberry & Hibiscus Soda

Shloer but make it hipster. (A good thing!)
 → www.londonessenceco.com. £1.85 a bottle.

8. Shrb Lime Juniper

Made using apple cider vinegar, this drink is savoury and refreshing.
 → www.shrbdrinks.com. £29 for 12 bottles.

9. FitBeer

Switch Diet Coke for this low-calorie zero-percent beer. It tastes just like Coors Light. ■
 → www.fitbeer.co.uk. £4.99 for two bottles.

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What's exclusive? Four dishes and a cocktail will set you back just £25.

→ Sea Containers. ⊖ Blackfriars. Until Mar 31.
www.timeout.com/seacontainers19

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What is it? A hot chocolate, cocktail or milkshake and a bowl of cereal.

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What's exclusive? Cereal and a drink (boozy or non-boozy) is just a tenner.

→ Camden and Brick Lane locations. Until Mar 31.
www.timeout.com/cereal

Royal Institution talks

What is it? A series of quirky and accessible talks held in the RI's lecture theatre.

Why go? Is self-improvement a new year's resolution of yours? Discover the fun side of science at these informal evening talks. Expect topics such as legalising cannabis and love in the twenty-first century.

What's exclusive? Each talk is 37 percent off – now just £10.

→ The Royal Institution. ⊖ Green Park. Select dates until Feb 14. www.timeout.com/ritalks

Roux at the Landau

What is it? Three courses and half a bottle of wine at Albert Roux and Michel Roux Jr's swish restaurant.

Why go? To tuck into dishes overseen by two very big names in the foodie world in one of the most divine dining rooms in all of London (Google it if you don't believe us). You'd be very silly to miss this one.

What's exclusive? Three courses and wine is just £49.

→ Roux at the Landau. ⊖ Oxford Circus. Until Mar 31. www.timeout.com/thelandau

VegfestUK Brighton

What is it? Tickets to the Brighton instalment of the popular food fest.

Why go? Food events are ten-a-penny these days, but it can be tricky to find one that isn't meat-and-dairy heavy. Worry not, animal-lovers, Vegfest is back and this time there are 230 stalls with everything from plant-based eating to cosmetics.

What's exclusive? Our tickets save you 50 percent: now just £4.

→ Brighton Centre. Brighton rail. Mar 23 and 24.
www.timeout.com/vegfest19

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Things to Do

Edited by Katie McCabe
timeout.com/thingstodo @timeoutlondon



Look to the stars

Gather with astronomy-lovers and find the best stargazing spots in London with our celestial guide to the city

Stargazing at Hall Place

New to novae and nebulas? No worries. Team up with local astronomy group Crayford Manor House Astronomical Society – they'll be taking over the grounds of a Grade I-listed Tudor mansion to introduce amateur sky-searchers to the world of stargazing. The gang will be dishing out tips and giving informal talks on how to go about choosing your own telescope. If the clouds keep away you'll be able to treat your eyes to a survey of the sky through a host of different telescopes.

→ Hall Place and Gardens. Bexley rail. Tue Jan 15. £10, book in adv.

'The Sky Tonight' Live

Get starstruck with a 360° tour of the night sky at the Peter Harrison Planetarium, where a state-of-the-art digital laser projector shines the heavens on the inside of the roof like an astronomical Imax. All you have to do is lie back and gasp as an astronomer points out which stars are spinning above your head. Glimpse constellations, planets and moons, and fly out to the edge of the visible universe. We'll forgive you if you take a selfie straddling the Prime Meridian line.

→ Royal Observatory. Cutty Sark DLR. Weekdays 4.15pm, weekends 11.45am, 2pm and 4.15pm. £8.

Blackheath Observing

Star-men and gals can get their celestial kicks on Blackheath Common, where the Flamsteed Astronomy Society set out their collection of telescopes once a month for some serious stargazing. As long as the night remains crisp and clear, they'll be proving that light pollution can be beaten by pointing out Mars, before focusing on the sparkling constellation of Orion and the Milky Way's very special Orion Nebula. We reckon Bowie would approve.

→ Blackheath Common. Blackheath rail. Jan 25 or Jan 26 depending on weather – check ahead that session is still on. Free.

Kenley Observatory

It may not be as famous (or as old) as its Greenwich counterpart, but this little observatory in south London is still a stellar spot to go starry-eyed over belts and dippers. Every Saturday (in good weather) the site is opened to the public, so Londoners can have a mosey around its domes and 14-inch telescope while getting a look at all the astral razzle-dazzle. The observatory is kept cold and dark to facilitate sparkler-spotting, so wrap up warm and bring a torch.

→ Kenley Observatory. Whyteleafe rail. Every Sat in good weather. Free entry, check details for the session in advance.





Royal Observatory



The Sky Tonight Live



Blackheath Observing

Christmas Present Scope Workshop

Don't know your azimuth adjustment knob from your counterweight thumbscrew? The Walton Astronomy Group are on the case. Newbie astronomers who've been gifted complex telescopes for Christmas (and have no idea how to use them) can bring their gadgets along to the green in Esher's West End village, where the astronomy set will show you how to get it up and running. If you're lucky enough to pick a clear night, they'll happily show you all the sparking sights that can be seen at this time of year, including the Orion Nebula M42, the Pleiades, aka the Seven Sisters (not the tube stop), and the Andromeda Galaxy.

→ Meet at Prince of Wales pub, KT10 8LA. Claygate rail then K3 bus. Thu Jan 17. Free, but email WAG_Chair@aol.co.uk in advance.

Dark Skies Sky Gazing at Down House

Charles Darwin may be better known for his theories on biology than big bangs, but his former gaff is a beautiful setting for a planetary party. Visit the very location where the big man penned 'On the Origin of Species' for a sparkling introduction to astronomy. Its suburban setting means the worst of the capital's light pollution is kept at bay and you can gaze at the bedazzled sky without distraction. An astronomy expert will be on hand to dish up solar facts and give top tips on how to gaze at the glittering multitudes. We're star-crossed already.

→ Down House. Orpington rail then R8 bus. Feb 8. £15.

Regent's Park Hub

Another group of city astronomers sticking two fingers up at the bright city lights are The Baker Street Irregular Astronomers. The cosmic club meet monthly at The Hub café in Regent's Park – which doesn't look too far off a Martian spaceship itself – to prove that if you have the right tools and expertise you can still see stars within the city limits. On clear nights, the group have managed to spot every planet in the solar system and spied

glimmers as far away as the Whirlpool Galaxy in deep space. Whether you have stargazing experience or not, everyone is invited to the meet-ups to have a peer through a telescope or two and catch some constellations.

→ Regent's Park Hub. ☺ St John's Wood. Visit www.bakerstreetastro.org for details of monthly meetings. Free.

Morden Hall Park

Light pollution is the nemesis of all stargazing Londoners, but at 125 acres, the huge meadow at Morden Hall Park is big enough to escape the glow of the city. During the day you'll find handsome avenues of trees and winding waterways in the ancient hay meadow, but come nightfall the grassy patch frames an expanse of inky, velvet blackness, one of the closest things to a legit Dark Sky site you'll find in the capital. Pick a clear, cloudless winter night, close to the new moon – it's the best time to track twinklers – and have your very own stargazing sesh. Who'd have thought a short stint on the Northern line would take you out of this world?

→ Morden Hall Park. ☺ Morden. Free.

Rooftop Astronomy

Zone 1 may not be the most obvious spot to spy stars, but there's no stopping the constellation connoisseurs at The Culpeper. After a hearty meal and a glass of biodynamic wine – farmed in conjunction with the lunar cycle – you can nurse your food baby up in the snug rooftop greenhouse where an astronomer will give you the lowdown on the cosmos. Get acquainted with Saturn, Mars and a few star clusters with the help of some hefty Dobsonian telescopes. Look lively, this one sells out well in advance. ■

→ The Culpeper. ☺ Aldgate East. Second Mon of the month. £40.



Alexandra Sims

Who's tried aiming for the stars, but is happy with the constellation prize.





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SOMETHING FOR THE WEEKEND

Friday



'Wiltshire Before Christ'

Something wiccan this way comes. Artists Jeremy Deller, David Sims and fashion brand Aries use photography and film in this immersive exhibition to explore pagan symbology and neolithic sites.

→ The Store X. ↻ Temple. Wed Jan 16-Jan 27. Free entry.

CELEBRATE Folk of the Woods Burns Night Ceilidh

Swig a dram, dig into stuffed sheep's stomach and twirl to a band of bagpipes at this knees-up. You'll have the gay gordon down in no time.

→ Portico Gallery. West Norwood rail. Fri Jan 18. £12.

DRINK The Chocolate Cocktail Club

Expect a serious sugar rush at this bar serving chocolatey twists on classic cocktails. Sink a chocotini, before gugging on a glass of chocolate wine.

→ 202 Brick Lane. Shoreditch High St Overground. Thu Jan 17-May 28. £10.

Saturday

LEARN 'No Woman Is An Island'

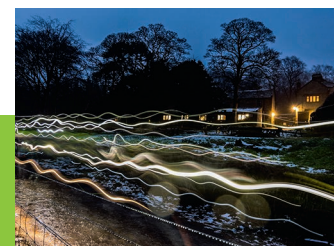
The London Short Film Festival closes with a night dedicated to female afrofuturism. Expect poetry from Xana, DJ sets and music videos from Missy to Janelle.

→ Rich Mix. Shoreditch High St Overground. Sat Jan 19. £12.50.

ROCK THE CASBAH Punk Flea Market and Car Boot Sale

Get your mohawk-slicking mitts on records and merch before a post-flea gig.

→ New River Studios. ↻ Manor House. Sat Jan 19. Free entry.



Osterley NightRun

Take a moonlit dash around Osterley's beautiful eighteenth-century mansion on an after-dark 7km run.

Tickets will raise funds to conserve the trails you traverse in the sculpted parkland.

→ Osterley Park and House. ↻ Osterley. Sat Jan 19. £14.

Sunday

Secret Urban Suppers: Brooklyn

Tuck into a five-course dinner inspired by the artistic character of the NYC borough. The location will be revealed a few days before. The menu is a secret until the night itself.

→ Secret Hackney location. Sun Jan 20. £35.



SWISH Betsy's Closet Swap Shop

Grab your unwanted clobber and exchange it for someone else's garb you're not sick of wearing at this eco-friendly swap shop.

→ Refettorio Felix. ↻ Earl's Court. Sun Jan 20. £3.

LISTEN Bounce Beat

A piano, clarinet, cello, flute and double bass are joined by live ping-pong percussion at this hot-shot concert, with each piece based on a different ping-pong technique. Have a ball.

→ Queen Elizabeth Hall. ↻ Waterloo. Sun Jan 20. Free.

Go on the run with timeout.com/fitness



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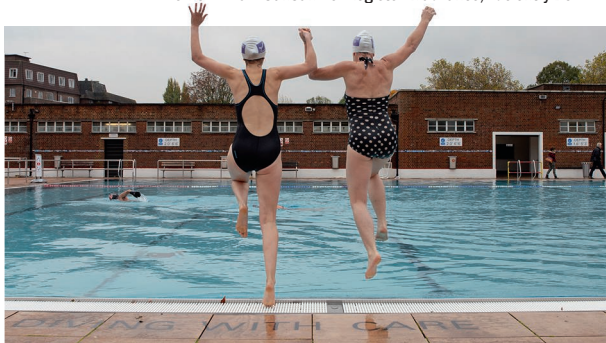
Winter swims

There's nothing like the zing of a bracing dip. Gather some friends and take the plunge



↑ Cold Water Dip meet-up

Online community Team52 is helping busy people find adventure through group challenges. Next up: a collective swim in Brockwell Lido. You don't need any experience or fancy gear, but there are prizes for the best swimming cap. → Brockwell Lido. Herne Hill rail. Sun Jan 20. Register in advance, lido entry £6.



↑ Winter Dip at Parliament Hill Lido

WaterAid's challenge to plunge into the Parliament Hill Lido will help raise money to bring clean water to some of the world's poorest countries. Once recovered from the swim, participants will be able to warm up in the jacuzzi and sauna.

→ Parliament Hill Lido. Gospel Oak Overground. Sun Jan 20. £25.



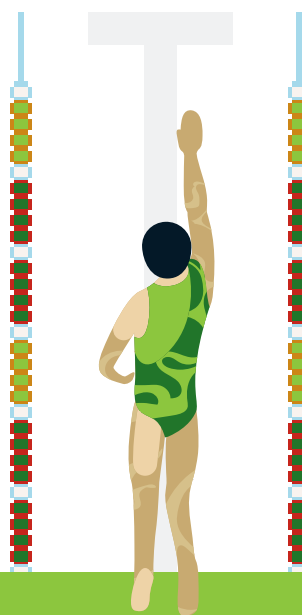
↑ London Royal Dock Open Water Swimming

Looking for something a little more 'wild'? Try a winter swim session at London Royal Dock, where you can front crawl through open water, safe in the knowledge that there are staff on site. And nobody will judge you for wearing a wetsuit.

→ Victoria Dock. Royal Victoria DLR. Sat Jan 19. £10, register in advance.

More of a 'heated pool' swimmer? Visit timeout.com/lidos

Things to Do



Tips for the dips

Co-founder of Team52 Annie Ross tells us how to safely brave a cold-water swim



Ease yourself in

You don't want to be jumping or diving. The icy shock can wreak havoc. Instead slip in slowly. Acclimatise, building your resilience up, over several weeks.

Keep it short and sweet

If the water temperature is below 12C, mini swims are best. Stay near the exit point and always swim with others.

Watch your head

Dare to wear two swimming hats. Earplugs help keep your core temperature up too.

Warm up

Get dry, don warm layers, then guzzle a hot drink and some food. Stay away from hot showers. They can interrupt the natural recovery process, known as the 'after-drop'.

→ Team52 is a challenge platform that makes it easier for people to get together and spend more time outdoors. Find out more at team-52.com.

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Titian, Portrait of Girolamo Fracastoro (detail), about 1528
© The National Gallery, London

Look out for these year-round events

For an even deeper dive into the borough, sign up to a tour that could range from a sailing holiday to an overnight stay in an unusual location.

Just ten minutes' walk from Walthamstow Central station is a space that's the hub of the London Borough of Culture. Expect workshops, art installations, talks, children's events and more.

You've never experienced Epping Forest like this. A year-long programme of events will see everything from children's choirs to performance art against a backdrop of towering oak trees.

Getting there Victoria line or Overground to Walthamstow Central.
Local bus routes 20, 34, 48, 69, 97, 212, 215, 230, 257, 275, 357, 675.

LGBT+ party purveyors Duckie are honouring Leytonstone's '60s icon Fanny Cradock the only way they know how: with a celebration featuring drag performances, DJs, market stalls and a massive dance spectacle.

Experimental electronic music and lighting installations meet brutalist architecture for this intriguing multi-venue festival.

Sixteen days, 7,500 artists, makers and performers. You'll want to set aside at least a day to explore this biennial art festival. Then, on June 22, Art Night will come to the borough with an all-night festival around Walthamstow High Street, featuring new commissions by local artists.

Promotional feature

GET THERE FOR £1.50!

Not only are many of these Waltham Forest adventures free – they also take place during TfL's wonderful world of off-peak. You'll pay just £1.50 when you travel off-peak within Zones 2-6 (not going via Zone 1) on Tube, DLR and most London Overground services. Off-peak fares apply every weekday before 6.30am, between 9.30am and 3.59pm, and after 7pm – plus all day at weekends and on bank holidays.

To check your fare, search TfL Single Fare Finder.

Catch the bus in Waltham Forest!

TfL's Hopper fare lets you take unlimited bus and tram journeys any time, anywhere within one hour of first touching in for just £1.50.

With a valid **Zip Oyster photocard**, kids aged 5-10 travel free on all Tube, DLR, London Overground and TfL Rail services. All kids aged 5-10 travel free on buses and trams. Apply for a Zip Oyster photocard today at tfl.gov.uk/zip.

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WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH

The Festival of New Masculinity

Podcasts, panels and, erm, a penis exhibition are coming to Shoreditch



A festival dedicated to men – because you never get to hear their views, right?

Okay, it's not like men are a particularly underrepresented facet of society, but this is no Subreddit social. Curated and organised in part by new online magazine The Book of Man, the three-month event series hopes to tackle the pitfalls of masculinity, rather than just filling a room with middle-aged white blokes shouting 'Why isn't there an international Men's Day?!'

So there won't be any dating advice from Dapper Laughs?

Far from it. The festival is actually focusing on the positive role that men can play in deconstructing the negative influence of patriarchal society. Panels and podcasts featuring the likes of Professor Green and trans actor Jake Graf will tackle subjects such as mental health and the crisis in masculinity, while an exhibition from photographer Dean Chalkley looks to dispel the archaic narrative of what it means to be a man.

Sounds like the meninists won't enjoy it.

Probably not. And they're not the only ones who might have an issue with it. The monthly Boys' Brunch won't be everyone's cup of tea, while the festival's finale – 'The Night of a Thousand Cocks' exhibition devoted to penises – will raise more than a few eyebrows. But we're keeping an open mind, especially as all ticket proceeds go to CALM, a charity for the prevention of male suicide, an urgent and worthwhile cause. Men of London: get ready to rediscover manhood in all its shapes and forms. ■ *Charlie Allenby*

→ Hoxton Square Bar & Kitchen and The Book Club.

⌚ Old St. Tue Jan 15-Mar 19. Prices vary.

DON'T MISS



Collective Cinema

Watch 'Moulin Rouge!' from pews in the overwhelming gothic setting of St Margaret's Church at this pop-up cinema. Saturday's screening of Baz Luhrmann's riotous film will be set to live music from the church organ.

→ St Margaret's Church. Blackheath rail. Sat Jan 19. £12.50.

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Wellcome Collection is part of the Wellcome Trust. Image: Tony Ray-Jones / RIBA Collections.

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Things to Do

DRINK

C World's Best Martini Challenge

Watch a clutch of top bartenders battle it out to create the best innovative twist on the 'classic' gin martini. Juniper fiends can sample each of the cocktails on show (plus get a slug of 2018's winning drink) and vote for their top tippie.

→ 100 Wardour St.

⊖ Tottenham Court Rd.

Tue Jan 15. £25.

C Hot Gin Roof

Beat the freeze by snuggling under a blanket on Ham Yard Hotel's toasty rooftop and sinking a great selection of hot gin cocktails. Make ours a Steaming Julep.

→ Ham Yard Hotel. ⊖ Piccadilly Circus. Until Feb 17. £18.

COSY NIGHTS OUT

E Sip and Snuggle Screening

Start the year off right at this screening of 'Little Miss Sunshine', where you can cosy up in South Place Hotel's Secret Garden with your dog and a steaming cup of hot chocolate. Even if you don't have a pooch you can still come along and bask in all the canine cuteness.

→ South Place Hotel.

⊖ Moorgate. Mon Jan 21. £20.

W Winter Happiness Festival

Cold and skint now January's arrived? This three-day fest is here to see you through the bleak season. Join happiness workshops, ecstatic dance classes or jump into a room filled with hundreds of eco-friendly balloons. Sounds like a gas.

→ Re:Centre. ⊖ Hammersmith. Sat Jan 19–Mon Jan 21. From £5.

LAUGH

N Natural Born Storytellers

The audience is encouraged to share true tales alongside professional yarn spinners at this regular storytelling night with an ever-changing theme. This week the topic is 'Making Mischief,' so come armed with yarns of tricks, pranks and

cheekiness, or just sit back and listen to some side-splitting anecdotes.

→ The Camden Head.

⊖ Camden Town. Wed Jan 16. £5.

E Perfect Liars Club

A little like 'Would I Lie to You?', four unexpected tales are told, but only three of them are true. It's down to the audience to find the fibber.

→ The Book Club. ⊖ Old St.

Tue Jan 15. £8–£10.

E The Annual 'Peep Show' Quiz

Know your 'Megatron' from your 'men with ven'? If you've got encyclopedic knowledge of the noughties sitcom, get a team together and you could win £200. Go El Dude Brothers!

→ Moth Club. Hackney Central Overground. Wed Jan 16.

£25 (per team, max five).

C Central **N** North **S** South **E** East **W** West

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DANCE

S Jive Party at The Rivoli Ballroom

Bop, rock and lindy hop in the gorgeous surroundings of the last intact 1950s ballroom in London. The night starts with a jive class, so twinkletoes of all abilities can join in.

→ The Rivoli Ballroom. Crofton Park rail. Sat Jan 19. £17.

TOUR

N Midweek Mulberries: Belsize Park to Hampstead

Explore a historic part of London through its wealth of old, and not-so-old, mulberry trees. Find out all about the curious species while stopping by Keats House and the iconic Willow Road.

→ Meet at Belsize Park tube station. ⊖ Belsize Park.

Wed Jan 16. £13.16.

LISTEN

C Rise Up

Whatever your bag, this open mic showcasing poets, rappers, singers and storytellers, will bring some magic to enthrall you.

→ Drink, Shop & Do.

⊖ King's Cross.

Thu Jan 17. Free.

EXCLUSIVE

Get two for one tickets to the Barbican's **'Modern Couples'** exhibition on art and modern love. Now just £16 for two.

→ TIMEOUT.COM/MODERNCOUPLES

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Film

Edited by Phil de Semlyen
timeout.com/film @timeoutfilm

'Normally, screenwriting has me questioning my validity as a human being'

TIME OUT MEETS

M Night Shyamalan

The man once hailed as the next Spielberg on his most anticipated film in ages

IN HIS TWENTIES, fresh-faced Philadelphia M Night Shyamalan was Hollywood's sweetheart. He had smash hit 'The Sixth Sense' behind him and, like a fabulously haunting campfire tale, it wriggled under the skin of everyone who saw it. It was followed by 'Unbreakable', a riff on superhero movies that's only grown in repute. Now in his late forties – though still fresh-faced – he bounced back from disappointments like Will Smith sci-fi flop 'After Earth' to register a hit with 'Split' in 2016. His latest, 'Glass', is the final part of a surprise trilogy that bundles 'Unbreakable' and 'Split' into a linked universe and brings together their three stars, Bruce Willis, James McAvoy and Samuel L. Jackson, for a big showdown. It's a cool notion, if a bit complicated. We'll let him explain.

'Glass' is a sequel to 'Split' and 'Unbreakable'. How long after 'Split' did the movie take shape?

'In retrospect it seems inevitable [that it would follow 'Split'] but that really wasn't the case. "Split" had to be successful and then I had to get two studios to agree to do it. I wanted to do it my way [with a low budget] and Universal and Disney wanted to pay for it. There were a couple of seductive moments of, "Just take the money." But when I do it this way, it weeds out people who aren't passionate about the material. You go, "You're going to get paid [a proportion of the box office], so if we make a great movie, we're all going to win. And if we don't, we don't deserve to.'

Was it tough bringing these three characters together in the script?

'It was not as torturous as some movies because I knew the characters. Normally, screenwriting is torture for me. I always start out questioning my validity as an artist and a human being [laughs]. Then I'll write a line that feels good, and that will open a window. But this was different because I knew these characters. I couldn't wait to write these scenes.'

It feels like the reputation of 'Unbreakable' has grown since it came out. Is that how you see it?

'That's my favourite thing about my movies: they have a good shelf life. For "Unbreakable", we built every set to match my shots. It was extravagant: a mass-market art movie about comic books! But the audience ended up being confused because it's sombre, the ending is the beginning, and a character they loved turned out to be bad.'

It's surprising that there aren't more films with such a realistic approach to superheroes. 'Batman Begins' is probably the closest.

'And "Logan". But it's hard because most of them are adapting [comics]. If a character has lasers coming out of their eyes, that's how it has to be.'

Is there a wider Shyama-verse? Is this set in the same world as, say, 'Signs'?

'There was a moment of mischievousness where I was thinking of making a reference to "The Visit", but I was mature enough not to put it in. This isn't opportunism; it's a finish to the original story that I've wanted to tell. I'm not a sequels person.' ■

→ 'Glass' is in cinemas from Fri Jan 18.



By Helen O'Hara

Whose superpower is the ability to eat an unfeasible amount of chocolate.

FREE PREVIEW SCREENING

'GREEN BOOK'

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LOVES



Time Out readers have a one-off chance to catch a preview screening of the Golden Globe-winning and Bafta-nominated drama 'Green Book' for free in London this month.

Set in America in 1962, 'Green Book' tells the heart-warming true story of Tony Lip (Viggo Mortensen), a working-class Italian-American bouncer who takes on a job as a chauffeur for Dr Don Shirley (Mahershala Ali), a highly-educated

African-American classical pianist. The mismatched pair embark on a two-month tour of concert venues in the racially charged deep south and discover they're on the road to a meaningful and unique friendship.

Apply now to discover for yourselves why 'Green Book' won three awards at the Golden Globes and will be contending for best film, leading actor, supporting actor and original screenplay at next month's Baftas.

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→ 'Green Book' opens in cinemas on Wednesday January 30. The film is rated 12A and is 130 minutes long.

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Monsters and Men



WHAT IS IT...

A inner-city drama for the Black Lives Matter era.

WHY GO...

For John David Washington – aka Denzel Jr – as a conflicted cop.

→ Director Reinaldo Marcus Green (15) 95 mins



ANOTHER SOBERING ADDITION to the ever-swelling canon of films addressing the Black Lives Matter movement, this sombre but deeply emotional drama offers three different perspectives on a single act of unprovoked police violence on a Brooklyn street corner. Significantly, the victim of that act is an ex-serviceman – he's laid to rest with the Stars and Stripes draped over him. There's no mistaking the point writer-director Reinaldo Marcus Green is making about the system of racial profiling, stop-and-search and trigger-happy policing, and how it makes victims of even the US's own supposed heroes and race traitors of African-American cops.

There are clear parallels here with last year's similarly themed 'The Hate U Give', but Green, adapting and expanding his own short film, brings in other perspectives. John David Washington offers an insider's viewpoint as a cop caught between bonds of loyalty to fellow officers and a simmering disgust for their barely disguised racism. His role is more muted than in 'BlackKkKlansman', but he shows tantalising glimpses of dad Denzel's effortless charisma.

It's a seriously promising first film from Green. He's an empathetic director who brings the camera close in to show events that are seismic yet depressingly mundane. He's rewarded with strong performances, especially Anthony Ramos as a bystander who films the shooting. It's a film that doesn't provide easy answers but asks a lot of worrying questions. ■ *Phil de Semlyen*

Mary Queen of Scots



WHAT IS IT...

A historical drama about the ill-fated Scottish monarch.

WHY GO...

To see Saoirse Ronan and Margot Robbie square off as rival queens.

→ Director Josie Rourke (15) 124 mins.



FOR THE ROYAL viciousness of two queens facing off, 'Mary Queen of Scots' is almost worth seeing, even if the backbiting is nowhere near as killer as in 'The Favourite' (it's a great time to be an onscreen monarch). However, it's visually dull and intriguing in only the most generic sense, though it is still a solid showcase for the twin talents of Saoirse Ronan and Margot Robbie.

Ronan plays the title role of Mary Stuart: estranged from her native Scotland, raised a Catholic in France and already widowed as a teenager. In 1561, Mary is returning home to a mess of competing claims to power. For all the soulfulness Ronan has summoned elsewhere – her performances in 'Brooklyn' and 'Lady Bird' especially – she's a little stiff at times here, uneasy in the saddle. Fortunately, Robbie is happy to pick up the slack as England's ruler Elizabeth I, cursed with bad skin, worse wigs, defective ovaries and a scheming cousin in Mary.

The script by Beau Willimon ('House of Cards'), based on John Guy's biography, awkwardly constructs only a single scene for them to play against each other (in reality, they never met). No matter: long before the verbal fireworks of that showdown Robbie exudes loneliness and fury in her gilded cage. Director Josie Rourke points out their differences a bit too obviously: Mary's bedsheets are covered in postnatal blood while Elizabeth has only decorative paper ribbons spread out before her. Even so, the shared fertility psychodrama is fierce. ■ *Joshua Rothkopf*



WHAT I KNOW ABOUT Mary Queen of Scots

Saoirse Ronan and Margot Robbie play rival queens in Josie Rourke's 'Mary Queen of Scots'. It's not your average history. Rourke explains how she ripped up the story you thought you knew

Mary has been slut-shamed by history

'My Spidey sense began to tingle when I started to read about her. What's generally written is that she was either too emotional or too sexual to make good decisions. She's basically been slut-shamed by history. She was a much more determined, subtle politician than that. Elizabeth I's advisor Cecil was on a mission to destroy her. To get Elizabeth I to sign Mary's death warrant, Cecil even pretended to her that the Spanish Armada had arrived a year early.'

Her relationship with Elizabeth I was... complicated

'This movie is trying to stop their relationship being portrayed as one long catfight. When people tell stories about male rivals, they are as much about mutual fascination as they are rivalry, from Richard II and Bolingbroke right through to Holmes and Moriarty. So I wanted to allow women some of that narrative as well.'

The two queens never actually met

'There is a gigantic amount of letters between Mary and Elizabeth. They never met but they corresponded vividly. In this film we create a meeting with a kind of heightened reality. As



someone who's come from directing theatre, it was exciting having this control over every element. We contrived it so that the two actors had never seen each other in costume. Then Saoirse Ronan [who plays Mary] rips down a sheet and they're eye-to-eye for the first time. They have this extraordinary emotional response.'

Sex was about way more than producing an heir

'This was a period when people thought that women couldn't conceive unless they reached orgasm. So this film reflects the era's focus on women's sexuality. The important thing about the scene [of cunnilingus between Mary and her future husband, Darnley] is that it's non-reproductive sex, and it's Mary feeling fully in control of her own pleasure for the first time.'

Her world was queerer than you'd think

'This was one of the most queer periods of history. Mary comes from the French court, which hosted parties for gay men on Sundays. So when Mary discovers her husband Darnley's sexual appetite, her response is to say that we need to be more careful. And that's a moment of forgiveness, but it's also a moment of political leadership.' ■ *Interview by Alice Saville*

LONDON ON SCREEN

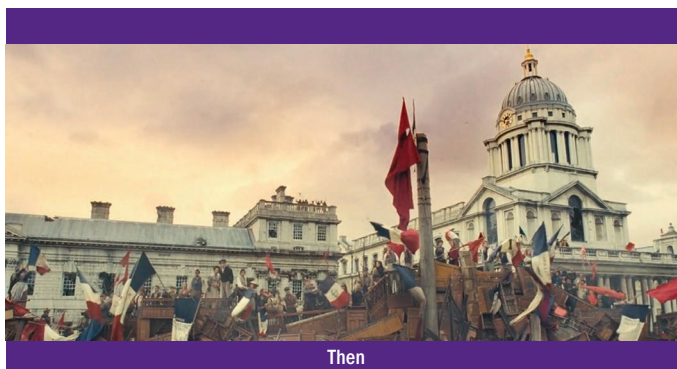
The Paris uprising from 'Les Misérables'

The location Old Royal Naval College, Greenwich

The scene The noble Jean Valjean (Hugh Jackman) lies dying in a church as young lovers Cosette (Amanda Seyfried) and Marius (Eddie Redmayne) pay their respects. He dies and his spirit is transported back to the tumultuous streets of Paris during the uprising of 1832.

Then While SE10 isn't the most obvious spot to recreate revolution-torn France, 'Les Misérables' director Tom Hooper and his crew turned the courtyard of Greenwich's Naval College into Parisian streets for the 2012 musical. 'We had an Indian wedding going on during filming,' says Ian Allchin, operations manager at the college. 'They were so happy when they saw the Elephant of the Bastille monument on set; it was like a sign from above so they all took photos in front of it.'

Now The Royal Naval College has since popped up in everything from 'Thor: the Dark World' to 'The Crown', providing funds to help maintain this World Heritage Site. Allchin admits it isn't easy balancing a music college, university, tourist spot and film set, but insists: 'We'll never completely close the college for a studio, as we want to give our visitors a chance to walk through a fully functioning Hollywood film set.' ■ Thomas Hobbs



Then



Now

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Beautiful Boy



TIMOTHEE CHALAMET is all of 23 years old and memorable as two radically different kinds of boyfriends in 2017's 'Call Me by Your Name' and 'Lady Bird'. He shows off his substantial chops again in 'Beautiful Boy', doing things that no other actor of his generation is attempting. You have to go back to Marlon Brando to see this kind of heartbreaking emotion, the angelic face turned upward, wrestling with frustration. Chalamet plays Nic Sheff, a uni-bound kid derailed by drugs: meth, pills, the works. What he achieves in a diner scene with Steve Carell (his panicky out-of-his-depth dad David) is incredible – a combination of cajoling, breaking down and acting tough. Even more impressive are Chalamet's wordless moments: a slack-jawed, Christian Bale-like zombie walk through a campus quad; a sober drive up the sunny California coast, Neil Young's 'Heart of Gold' on the stereo, the dissatisfaction slowly creeping in.

WHAT IS IT...

An emotionally pummeling drug-addiction drama.

WHY GO...

For Timothée Chalamet, a superstar in the making.

→ Director Felix van Groeningen (15) 120 mins.



In truth, it's better to focus on the outstanding Chalamet than the overly earnest, uneven movie around him. 'Beautiful Boy' is unflinching and keenly attuned to the cyclical nature of drug relapses along with the deeper blows to pride, trust and identity. But it also makes its points

with a jabbing finger rather than through subtler storytelling shifts. The script comes from the dual father-son memoirs of David and Nic Sheff, and director Felix van Groeningen gets out of the way of his performers to uncover a rawness that elevates this above telly drama. ■ *Joshua Rothkopf*

DON'T MISS

Oscar's Bar



The latest addition to London's seriously fancy-schmancy cinema bar scene, Oscar's Bar in the newly refurbished Odeon Luxe Leicester Square, is officially open for business. Ditch Dry January for a few serene minutes, grab yourself a prosecco and watch the world go by in the square below. Oh, and you can catch a movie there too.

→ Odeon Luxe Leicester Square. ⇄ Leicester Square.

ALSO OPENING

HALE COUNTY THIS MORNING, THIS EVENING →



RaMell Ross went to Hale County, Alabama, to coach basketball and teach photography, but he also had his video camera, and started shooting everyday stuff with the families in this largely black rural community. Five years and 1,300 hours of footage later, he distilled it all down to this hand-crafted 76-minute doc. Lyrical, sincere and affirmative, it offers a cliché-free inside look at ordinary African-Americans that's far from conventional and deeply satisfying. *Trevor Johnston*



THE RAFT



In 1973, social anthropologist Santiago Genovés built a raft, selected ten volunteers and set them adrift in the Atlantic for three months. The experiment aimed to explore how social dynamics, sexual politics and danger would affect the group. Would they form a kind of social utopia or bash each other's brains in with rocks?

Director Marcus Lindeen's fascinating doc delves into this bizarre experiment, reconstructing the raft and reuniting most of the subjects. Their meeting after 40 years is super-awks. *David Hughes*

LONDON UNPLUGGED



The 11 filmmakers in this portmanteau of capital-set short stories really struggle to put twenty-first-century London on film. There are some okay moments, but overall it explains why a lot of modern Brit movies are set in semi-rural poverty with a load of pylons and clapped-out Ford Fiestas in fields. ■ *Chris Waywell*

Music & Nightlife

Edited by Oliver Keens
timeout.com/music @timeoutmusic

We love you, VFD

Ten years ago, it was a party house in Dalston. Now it's a bonafide London treasure that champions independent queer artists and clubbers. We celebrate a decade of VFD

SINCE IT OPENED a decade ago, VFD (formerly Vogue Fabrics) has become one of London's most exciting and culturally important club spaces. This modest Dalston basement is a subterranean queer nirvana where everyone is welcome and just about anything goes.

A random visit might see you at regular nights like Transmissions – a weekly meet-up for trans, non-binary and intersex people – or Shit Hot Shit Pop, a monthly party which blasts everything from Robyn and Beyoncé to Meghan Trainor. Avant-garde rapper Mykki Blanco played his first ever London gig at VFD; subversive performance artists David Hoyle and Christeene even 'got married' here.

But surprisingly, VFD kind of happened by accident – when fashion designer Lyall Hakaraia moved into a 'basically derelict' four-storey house on Stoke Newington Road. 'There was never any masterplan,' he tells me as he prepares

Lyall Hakaraia



for 'VFD10 – Punish the Streets', an exhibition celebrating the venue's decade of nurturing club culture and creativity. 'My friends and I really loved partying, so my house became party central. After two years of waking up with empty red wine bottles everywhere and high-heeled shoes in the fridge, it just felt natural to turn it into a business.'

Before Dalston Superstore and The Glory opened their doors, VFD was Dalston's only dedicated LGBT+ space. Hakaraia says it was 'embedded and invested in the local queer community' from the very start. 'This integrity has made all the difference,' he says. 'We weren't pretending to be something we weren't, and sometimes we were just kind of stumbling along. But this was incredibly appealing to people because they could put their own stamp on things. I think we've lasted this long because we've always been real.'

HAIR: YON LUDANO PUSSELL; FOUR BLONDES ONE CUP: REBECCA THOMAS; NEAR: ADRIAN LOUIE; UNILINARIAN: DANIELLE LEVY

More tales of nightlife legend at
[timeout.com/clubs](https://www.timeout.com/clubs)



**'We got this
frantic call
from the police
asking why
there were big
penis balloons
floating towards
Buckingham
Palace'**



Cabaret royalty Bourgeois & Maurice say that us they see VFD as 'a queer Stonehenge – a site of pagan witchcraft from which unknowable magic spews'. Such magic has much to do with Hakaraia's dedication to diversity and fun in equal measure. Hakaraia says he always aims to programme 'new and unique' events, but stipulates that any VFD party should be 'queer and inclusive and welcoming'. In the past, he's refused to allow promoters to turn women away from nights aimed at gay men. 'And I like the music policy to be accessible to everybody,' he adds. 'You might hear cutting-edge music at VFD, but you'll also hear songs you know. Because when you can sing along to the music, that gives you ownership of the night and makes you part of it.'

Patrick Cash and Hannah Gordon, who bring open-mic night Spoken Word London to VFD twice monthly, say the venue has 'become a community hub for the East End' because Hakaraia 'has supported a variety of artists, DJs, designers and promoters, many of them young and starting out'. They reckon the venue's 'defiantly queer aesthetic' – which includes notorious penis murals created by drag artist Victoria Sin – makes it 'a real one-of-a-kind place'.

On one occasion, VFD's penis motif nearly got everyone into trouble. When VFD hosted a pop-up at the ICA, Sin decorated the iconic arts venue with cardboard penises attached to helium balloons. 'But when people left, they obviously took the balloons with them, then let them go on The Mall,' Hakaraia recalls with a laugh. 'So we got this frantic call from the police asking why there were big penis balloons floating towards Buckingham Palace. We had to run out and rescue them all!'

With ten years under its glittery belt, VFD seems like it's definitely built to last. 'A queer space like this is more necessary than ever,' Hakaraia says emphatically. 'Sections of the community like trans people are being vilified, and globally, there's so much polarisation between rich and poor. At a time like this, it's the job of artists and creative spaces to communicate between the two. So I'm absolutely looking ahead to another decade of VFD.' ■

→ 'VFD 10 – Punish the Streets' runs until Mar 10 at New Arts Project, 6D Sheep Lane, E8 4QS. Cambridge Heath Overground.



By Nick Levine
*Who's been mesmerised by the penis
murals once too often....*



WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH Marc Rebillet

In a nutshell?

He's a self-made, internet-famous New York-based musician-cum-comedian. If you're sniggering at the word 'cum', Rebillet might just be your guy!

Hmm, seems, er, highbrow. Who can you compare him too?

Mac DeMarco, for people who read *DJ Mag*. Or, less cryptically: a one-man beat loopin' performer like Reggie Watts and Jamie Lidell. He's also a bit of a clown figure – more Sideshow Bob than Krusty, though, what with his '70s porno moustache and slightly creepy undertones.

How has he got big? And what does he sound like?

Simple-but-effective white-boy funk jamz. Think the ironic falsetto of noughties Beck or Jimmy Fallon's slow-jam pastiches on 'The Tonight Show'. He's used YouTube-style promotion to climb from the small screen to venues across the States and Europe. Some of the music's actually pretty ace, to be fair. It's just that the lyrics and song themes are sometimes a bit dodgy.

A comedian with dodgy content? Whatever next.

Maybe we're having a sense of humour failure, but there's something a bit dodgy about songs like 'It's Out' (with its shouted 'you silly bitch' line). And then there's 'Stop That Rape', which, although obviously condemning it, does so in a quite spectacularly tactless and crass way.

Oh dear. So was that song not the end of him?

No, not at all. Tons of diehard fans (of him, not of Bruce Willis) still love his stuff. He's started touring recently, and out of nowhere sold out many dates on his UK almost immediately. So it's really just the start of his loopy looping-the-loop. But is he any cop, though? Over to you. ■ *Kyle MacNeill*

→ Marc Rebillet plays the Jazz Cafe on Jan 24.

GIGS AND CLUBS

Razed & Confused

Beat the January blues by checking out this new 'cabaret night of pure queer chaos' in Bethnal Green. Scene stars Lucy McCormick, Chiyo Gomes and Ophelia Love will all be performing, with the inimitable Meth on hosting duties.

→ Redon. Wed Jan 16.

Re-Textured

What do you get when you combine 'experimental electronic music, brutalist architecture and innovative lighting installations'? London's most intriguing new multi-venue festival – especially now that

Demdike Stare, Aisha Devi, Machine Woman and more have been added to an already stacked line-up.

→ Various locations. Mar 28-31.

Cro Cro Land

This brand new festival in Croydon channels the area's punky heritage by gathering a load of guitar bands for a celebration of indie and alternative sounds. With local rising stars Nova Twins on the bill and organisers promising that gender equality will be at the event's heart, this one definitely looks sound.

→ Urban Xchange. Apr 6.

JORJA SMITH: REDFERNS, IN THE ROUND; JOHN WILLIAMS PHOTOGRAPHY



Field Day

Drum roll please... Skepta and Jorja Smith (right) are this year's headliners! Joining them at FD's new post-industrial Enfield site: Diplo, The Black Madonna, Modeselektor, Jungle, Pusha T, Earl Sweatshirt, Deerhunter, Julia Holter, Denis Sulta, Todd Terje, Bonobo and Marie Davidson.

→ Meridian Water. Jun 7-8.

Discover more new music at [timeout.com/music](https://www.timeout.com/music)

In the Round

The Roundhouse's annual series of 360-degree shows is a delightful way to usher in a new year of live music. Punk matriarch Patti Smith's show has sold out, but – deep breath – Ana Moura, Fatima, Gruff Rhys, Ronnie Spector & The Ronettes, Sam Palladio, Jim James, This Is The Kit and Shirley Collins all have shows in January with tickets available. Go. Don't be a square.

→ Roundhouse. Jan 22-31.



James Blake

The sweet and tender singer has just announced new album 'Assume Form' – joined by Travis Scott, Andre 3000, Rosalia, Moses Sumney and Metro Boomin – plus a new London show in Hammersmith.

→ Eventim Apollo. Apr 18.

Junction 2

New names have been added to the line-up of this sweet summer dance-music fest. Gilles Peterson and Hunee bring a bit of variety, while technoid heavy hitters Objekt, Amelie Lens, Dixon and Ricardo Villalobos also join the fun.

→ Boston Manor Park. Jun 7-8.

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Theatre & Dance

Edited by Andrzej Lukowski
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The year of our Lord

The hottest theatremaker of 2019 is... Andrew Lloyd Webber!?!? Here's how the musical peer got his mojo back

IN 2010, ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER was more or less laughed out of town following his godawful 'Phantom of the Opera' sequel 'Love Never Dies' (aka 'Paint Never Dries'). Would his career recover? Erm, yep. Love him or loathe him, 2019 is going to be his (again). Here are five reasons why Brexit year is gonna be Lloyd Webber year.

1 His old shows are cool now

Andrew Lloyd Webber is not cool. You know this. He knows this. There's no need to get into it. But as time goes by his older stuff has been reclaimed by younger theatremakers who grew up with it. Witness Regent's Park Open Air Theatre's grungy 'Jesus Christ Superstar', which transfers to the Barbican this summer, and then get very excited by the prospect of iconoclastic

showman Jamie Lloyd tackling 'Evita' in Regent's Park in August.

→ 'Jesus Christ Superstar' is at the Barbican Centre. Jul 4-Aug 24.

'Evita' is at the Open Air Theatre. Aug 2-Sep 21.

2 He's got the grassroots support

In 1989, Lloyd Webber was so popular he could have just sent Michael Ball out to swear at a West End theatre audience for three hours and it would have been a massive hit. Arguably, though, that year's epic weepie 'Aspects of Love' – which is kind of about a love, uh, pentagon (?) between expats in mid-twentieth-century Paris – needed a much more intimate staging than the one it received. Thirty years on and bingo: a revival has transferred down from Manchester's dinky Hope Mill Theatre on a wave of acclaim.

→ Southwark Playhouse. Until Feb 9.





'Aspects of Love'

3 He's going to have a massive hit film in December, probably

'Evita' and 'Phantom' have been adapted into decent-sized hits, albeit not in the 'Les Misérables'/'Greatest Showman' league. With 'Cats', 2019 could be the year Lloyd Webber finally scores that enormo-smash he's been hungry for. A dementedly eclectic cast – Taylor Swift, Judi Dench, Ian McKellen, Rebel Wilson, Idris Elba, James Corden – has been assembled by 'Les Mis' director Tom Hooper for this adaptation of the smash 1981 show about some cats hanging out and singing some TS Eliot-inspired ditties.

→ 'Cats' is out on Dec 20.

4 His last show was massive

After two long decades of flops and half-hits, Lloyd Webber did what he needed to do and made a musical version of a Jack Black film. Sure, it's a weird fit on paper, but 'School of Rock' ran for three years on Broadway (in fact it finally closes on Sunday) and is still rockin' away in the West End. Toss in 'Phantom', which has been packing 'em in since 1986, and a massive imminent revival of 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat' that's selling out the London Palladium without any sort of cast or creatives announcement, and you'd probably have to concede he's doing all right for himself.

→ 'School of Rock' is at the Gillian Lynne Theatre.

Until Oct 20. 'The Phantom of the Opera' is at Her Majesty's Theatre. Until Oct 5. 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat' is at the London Palladium. Jun 27-Sep 7.

5 He's wisely left it there (for now)

Look, you can't mock what isn't there and with 'School of Rock' still a hit it's probably sensible not to push it and risk another 'Stephen Ward'/'Love Never Dies'/'The Woman in White'-style farrago. A Richard Curtis-helmed musical adaptation of Lloyd Webber's memoir 'Unmasked' is being heavily threatened, but don't expect it in 2019. In Britain's great year of nationalism, it's high time we learned to re-love our very own homegrown hitmaker. ■



By Andrzej Lukowski
Who is fine with all this so long as there's no 'Starlight Express'.

ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER: CAMERA PRESS / CHRIS MCANDREW; 'ASPECTS OF LOVE': PAMELA RAITH; 'THE WAR OF THE WORLDS': RICHARD DAVENPORT; SONGS FOR NOBODIES: NICK BRITAIN

The War of the Worlds



WHAT IS IT...

A smart homage to Orson Welles's broadcast.

WHY GO...

For a stylish take on a sci-fi classic.

→ New Diorama Theatre.

⊖ Great Portland St.

Until Feb 9. £15, £3 JSA.



'THE WAR OF THE WORLDS' by physical theatre troupe Rhum & Clay is a pleasingly twisty turny thing: it's not a stage version of the classic sci-fi; but it's not *not* a stage version.

At the start it styles itself as an arch homage to Orson Welles's 1938 radio version, which famously reimagined HG Wells's novel as a series of faux news bulletins about a Martian invasion of New Jersey.

The four performers ape Welles's distinctive tones as they talk us through the story of how his broadcast seemingly caused a national panic in the US. This still-notorious incident marked the apex of radio's power as a medium.

Then there's an abrupt shift to the present day as we meet Meena (Mona Goodwin), a gauche young Brit who decides to head New Jersey to make a podcast about a human interest story relating to the night of the broadcast.

If you think about it too hard, it's a pretty silly tale. But Rhum & Clay tell it with a stylish lo-fi conviction and a committed physicality that really sells it. And besides, it's more of a parable, about how false narratives – fake news, if you must – become history, become culture.

It cries out for, and lacks, a killer ending. But as a smartly ambivalent homage to the golden age of radio and the part myths play in our lives, it's a winner. ■ Andrzej Lukowski

Songs for Nobodies



WHAT IS IT...

A poignant musical stuffed full of songbook standards.

WHY GO...

For a stunning performance by Bernadette Robinson.

→ Ambassadors Theatre.

⊖ Leicester Square.

Until Feb 23. £25-£75.



IN THESE DAYS of Instagram, the documented celebrity encounter is fairly ubiquitous. By contrast, this musical delves into the effect of meeting famous people in a pre-internet era, finding a touchingly affecting space somewhere between fabricated folklore and fact.

Joanna Murray-Smith uses standards by iconic twentieth-century singers – Judy Garland, Patsy Cline, Edith Piaf, Billie Holiday and Maria Callas – as the pulse and rhythm of a series of imagined encounters. The show's star, Bernadette Robinson, transforms herself into characters ranging from a broken-hearted lavatory attendant, who randomly meets Garland in a hotel bathroom, to a librarian whose father was freed from a German prison camp by Piaf.

These are the 'nobodies' of the title, but, of course, that's not how they come across. Murray-Smith mines a rich seam of longing, humour and quiet frustration to conjure the alchemic effect of these women's encounters with their musical idols. She creates a tightly constructed 90 minutes that, in spite of its episodic nature, never feels too rote. And Robinson demonstrates huge versatility as she moves between characters, while bringing as much personality and distinctiveness to the songs themselves. There's room for heartbreak and hope as she lifts them from the page. ■ Tom Wicker

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Theatre & Dance

NEW SHOWS THE HOTTEST THEATRE OPENINGS THIS WEEK

WEST END

Asphodel Meadows/ The Two Pigeons

The Royal Ballet's new mixed bill is full of playful lyricism.

→ Royal Opera House.
⇨ Covent Garden. Until Feb 13.
£3-£70.

Totem

Cirque du Soleil's latest show is all about the survival of the fittest.

→ Royal Albert Hall.
⇨ South Kensington.
Until Feb 26. £35.48-£127.93.

The Queen of Spades

Stefan Herheim stages Tchaikovsky's

high-stakes opera of love and gambling.

→ Royal Opera House.
⇨ Covent Garden. Until Feb 1.
£49-£215.

London International Mime Festival

The artfully curated visual theatre fest.

→ Various venues. Until Feb 3.
£12.50-£28.

OFF- WEST END

Chinese Arts Now

A brand new festival devoted to British-Chinese performance.

→ Various venues. Until Feb 2.
£5-£20.

Rosenbaum's Rescue

A new play inspired by the escape of Jews from Nazi-occupied Denmark.

→ Park Theatre. ⇨ Finsbury Park. Until Feb 9. £18.50-£32.50, £16.50-£23.50 concs.

The Singing Mermaid

An undersea puppet show for tots.

→ Little Angel Theatre.
⇨ Angel. Until Jan 27. £13.50, £11.50 concs.

Twelfth Night

A festival-inspired take on Shakespeare aimed at older kids and teens.

→ Southwark Playhouse.
⇨ Elephant & Castle. Thu Jan 17-Feb 9. £22, £18 concs.

The Unreturning

Anna Jordan's new play explores the impact of war.

→ Theatre Royal Stratford East.
⇨ Stratford. Wed Jan 16-Feb 2.
£10-£41.

LAST CHANCE

The Inheritance

Matthew Lopez's gay epic is box-set theatre at its best.

→ Noël Coward Theatre.
⇨ Leicester Square. Until Sat Jan 19. £28-£104.50 per part.

EXCLUSIVE

Get 42 percent off tickets to Kenneth MacMillan's classic romantic tragedy 'Manon' at the London Coliseum. Tickets to his salacious ballet start at £10.

TIMEOUT.COM/MANON

TOP-SELLING TICKETS

ATTIMEOUT.COM/TICKETS

1 The Book of Mormon

The box office smash from the 'South Park' boys.

→ Prince of Wales Theatre. Until Apr 27.

2 Caroline, or Change

A moving, magical story of injustice in 1963 Louisiana.

→ Playhouse Theatre. Until Apr 6.

3 Betrayal

Pinter starring Hiddleston.

→ Harold Pinter Theatre. Mar 5-Jun 1.

4 Summer & Smoke

The sultry tale of heartbreak.

→ Duke of York's Theatre. Until Sat Jan 19.

5 Company

A brilliant musical about love.

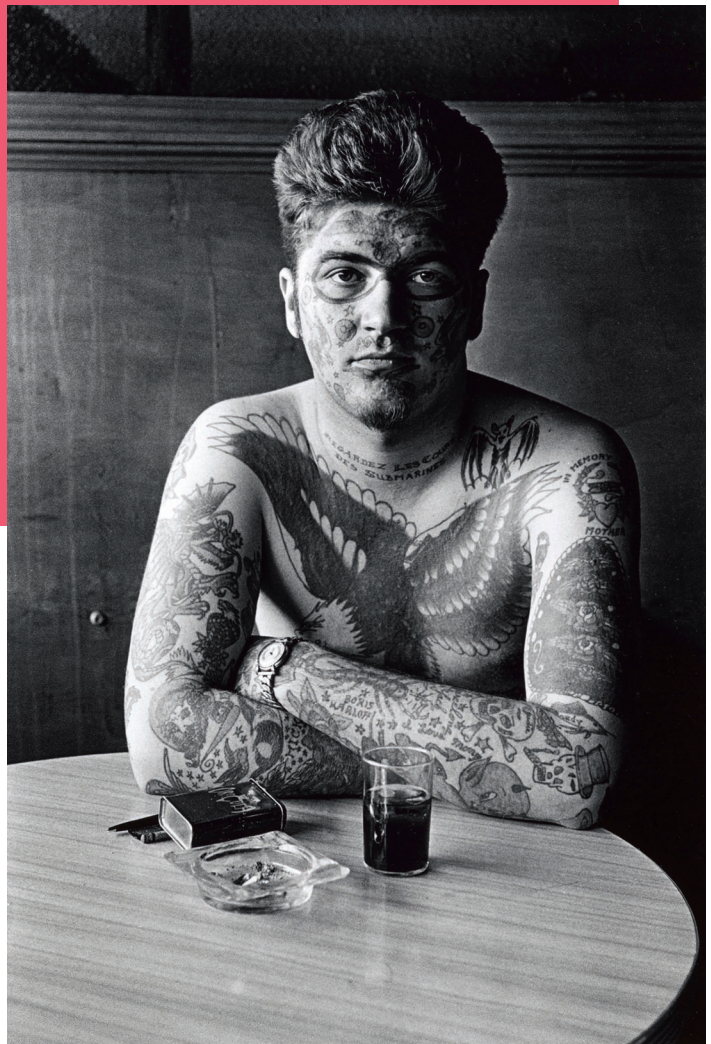
→ Gielgud Theatre. Until Mar 30.

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Art

Edited by Eddy Frankel
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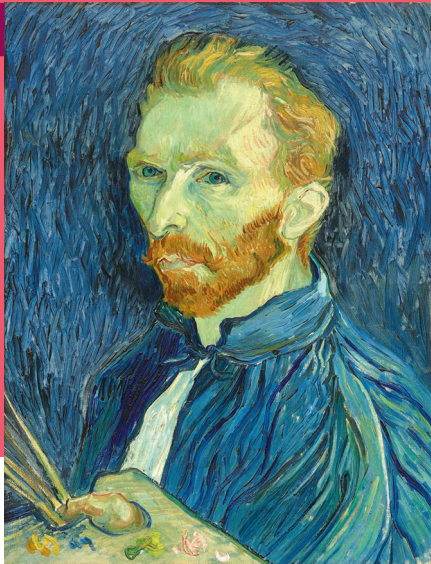
Nine art exhibitions to get *really* excited about in 2019

This year is shaping up to be an amazing year for art. Here are the exhibitions our Art editors are most looking forward to

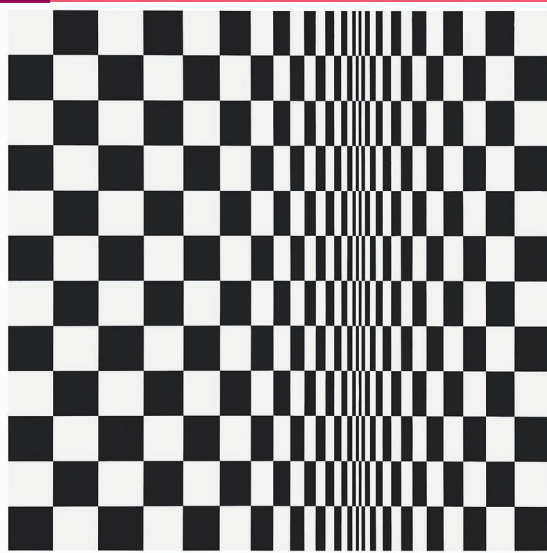
1 Diane Arbus: 'In the Beginning' ↑
Diane Arbus's photographs remain some of the most striking, tender and unnerving portraits ever taken. This new show at the Hayward Gallery focuses on the early years of the iconic photographer's career (1956-62), presenting more than a hundred images which have never been shown in Europe before.
→ Hayward Gallery. ☉ Waterloo. Feb 13-May 6.
£14, £11 concs.



2



9



5



2 'Van Gogh and Britain'

Yeah, yeah, Van Gogh, we get it: sunflowers, starry nights, chopped-off ears. But that's not the whole story, because a lesser-known fact about the brilliant Dutch painter is that he was a bit of an Anglophile. Spending time in England during the early days of his career, he was heavily influenced by British writers and artists (notably Dickens, George Eliot, Constable and Millais). Here's your chance to admire his artworks alongside those by British artists who, in turn, owe a debt to Vincent.

→ Tate Britain. ☎ Pimlico. Mar 27-Aug 11. £22, £20 concs.

4



3 Hito Steyerl: 'Power Plants'

Steyerl is a big deal: the German artist is essentially the leading thinker in forward-looking contemporary art, a huge influence on younger artists and a defining art theorist of our age. Sure, sounds dense, but the result is complex, ultra-engaging art that deals with topics such as artificial intelligence, surveillance and power structures. Her show at the ICA back in 2014 was a triumph, and we can't wait for this new exhibition.

→ Serpentine Sackler Gallery. ☎ Lancaster Gate. Mar 6-May 6. Free.

4 Edvard Munch: 'Love and Angst'

It's the exhibition whoever invented the scream emoji has been waiting for. The British Museum is staging a huge show of Norway's most famous painter, Edvard Munch, starting in the spring. The exhibition, which includes major loans from the Munch Museum in Oslo, will focus on the artist's prints and his unique ability to represent intense human emotions such as grief, sorrow, jealousy and desire – you know, the ones we felt long before we had the emojis to represent them.

→ British Museum. ☎ Holborn. Apr 11-Jul 21. £14, £12 concs.

5 Lee Krasner: 'Living Colour'

Lee Krasner is one of the most important, but most overlooked, abstract artists of the last century. Her vivid, large-scale canvases that explode in fireworks of colour are stunning, but you'll also be able to see her superb charcoal drawings and some early self-portraits. The Barbican aims to stop Krasner always being mentioned in the same breath as her husband (also an artist). Being a female artist is total Pollocks.

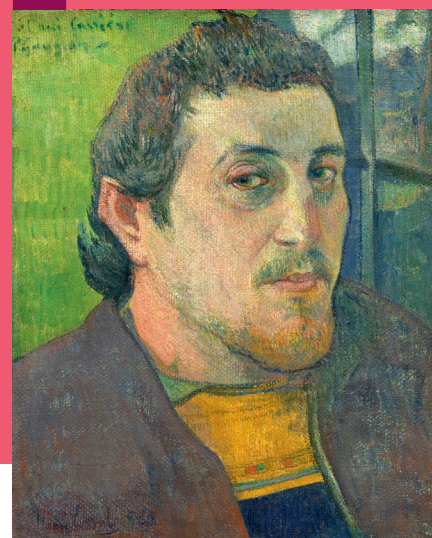
→ Barbican. ☎ Barbican. May 30-Sep 1. £15-£17, £11 concs.



3



8



6 Cindy Sherman

Long before 'selfie culture' became a thing, Cindy Sherman was experimenting with creating an endless collection of photos of herself in different outfits, identities and settings. This major retrospective at the National Portrait Gallery demonstrates how her practice has developed since the 1970s and features plenty from the artist's seminal series. More than anything, this is your chance to stand in a room entirely filled with works by one of the most intelligent, inspiring and intriguing artists of the last 40 years.

→ National Portrait Gallery. ☉ Charing Cross. Jun 27-Sep 15. £18, £16.50 concs.

7 Olafur Eliasson

In 2003, visitors to Tate Modern went mad for Olafur Eliasson's Turbine Hall installation 'The Weather Project', a giant glowing sun that bathed visitors in light, day or night. Now he's coming back to the same gallery with a big exhibition and an outside artwork. He's even taking over the Terrace Bar, turning it into a vegetarian canteen. A treat for the eyes and the mouth.

→ Tate Modern. ☉ Southwark. Jul 11-Jan 5 2020. £18, £17 concs.

8 'Gauguin Portraits'

The art of Paul Gauguin isn't exactly unknown (to say the least), but there's never been an exhibition dedicated exclusively to his portraiture – until now. See how the artist put his own twist on the traditional genre of portraiture as he walked away from impressionism and dived into symbolism.

→ National Gallery. ☉ Charing Cross. Oct 7-Jan 26 2020. £TBC.

9 Bridget Riley

Look into the painting. Look into the painting for longer. Keep looking into the painting. Look at the painting with the intensity of a heron about to catch a slippery fish. Now, stop looking at the painting. Turn around and walk in a straight line. Ah. Walking is hard sometimes, isn't it? Bridget Riley, Queen of Op Art, grand dame of British painting, is getting a big solo show at the Hayward in the autumn and it's going to be filled with the artist's famous perception-altering artworks from across seven decades. ■

→ Hayward Gallery. ☉ Waterloo. Oct 23-Jan 26 2020. £TBC.

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Dinings SW3

Chisou

A great escape from the West End's shopping bedlam, calming Chisou is an unobtrusive shoo-in for aficionados of pure-bred traditional Japanese cuisine. There's excellent sushi grazing at the counter, but izakaya-style sharing is the way to go for high-end lunching in the harmoniously neutral dining room. It's relaxed and atmospheric, with just the right amount of bustle.

→ 22-23 Woodstock St, W1C 2AR. ☉ Bond St. £££

Dinings SW3

Dinings' charmingly poky Marylebone original isn't really posh lunch territory, but its sleek Chelsea sequel definitely is. The luxe street-level sushi bar and sunken dining room provide a striking backdrop for some stunning, subtly complex modern Japanese cooking. Wash it down with a cheeky glass of sake. What Dry January?

→ Lennox Gardens Mews, SW3 2JH. ☉ South Kensington. £££

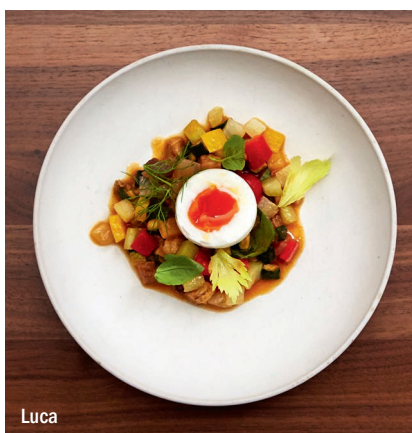
Indian Accent

Forget liking it hot: Indian Accent is for those who like it seriously swish. The dining room looks like one of those international Raj hotels, almost everyone wears a suit and the swanky-pants setting is matched by clever, technical food that's pure class and service that's as slick as it comes. Prices are top-end, though if you want to be a bit more careful of cost they do two courses for £25.

→ 16 Albemarle St, W1S 4HW. ☉ Green Park. ££££



Roganic



Luca

Luca

From the bods behind The Clove Club, this classy joint serves up 'Britalian' cooking in a hyper-smooth design-mag setting of billowing drapes, burnished mirrors and deco-rustic fittings. Pasta's the big shout (they make it on site), and there's an 'express' lunch menu in the bar for those with tight schedules and trimmer wallets.

→ 88 St John St, EC1M 4EH. ☉ Farringdon. £££

Orrery

Serene and elegant, with bucolic views through its arched windows, Orrery achieves the almost-impossible – serving up a lunchtime menu of exceptional beauty, glamour and flavour in demure grey-toned surroundings that are the toast of Marylebone. Three courses will just about leave change from £30, without drinks or extras. It's a no-brainer for a long, luxurious afternoon.

→ 55 Marylebone High St, W1U 5RB. ☉ Baker St. ££££

Roganic

Remember the days when fancy lunches drifted on for hours? Well, you'll need plenty of time (and money) if you're planning to tackle the menu at Simon Rogan's reprised Roganic. The food is a procession of tiny and technically clever plates – little miracles of nature shot through with inventive, palate-challenging flavours. ■

→ 5-7 Blandford St, W1U 3DB. ☉ Bond St. ££££

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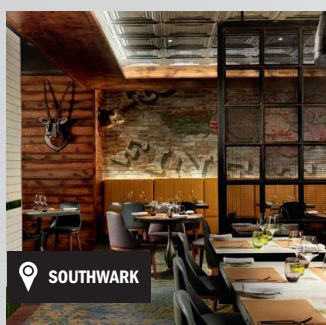
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COVENT GARDEN

THE TOP SECRET COMEDY CLUB SAYS:

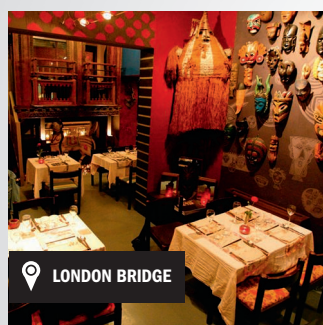
'With top-quality comedy every night of the week, big names such as Amy Schumer, Dara Ó Briain, Eddie Izzard and Trevor Noah frequently stop by to work out new jokes and practice their sets. Plus there's a cheap bar. All of this makes the Top Secret Comedy Club the perfect place to spend an evening with friends, family or loved ones. Not to mention the guaranteed giggles.'
170a Drury Lane, WC2B 5PD.



SOUTHWARK

OXBO BANKSIDE SAYS:

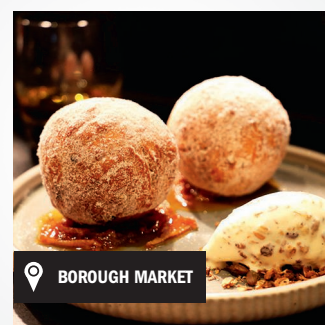
'Oxbo Bankside offers a modern, relaxed approach to fine dining with a flavour-packed fusion of European dishes using produce from nearby Borough Market. Take advantage of the set dinner menu, available Monday to Friday, which includes three courses and a glass of prosecco for £21pp. Perfect for an after-work catch up or date night.'
Hilton London Bankside, 2-8 Great Suffolk St, SE1 0UG.



LONDON BRIDGE

CHAMPOR-CHAMPOR SAYS:

'Champor-Champor, one of the finest Thai/Malay restaurants in London, is not just another Asian restaurant. It has a whole culture of its own – a total dining experience. The term 'champor champor' is actually a Malay expression, which can be loosely translated as 'mix and match', and the food here fuses Eastern and Western cuisines.
62-64 Weston St, SE1 3QJ.



BOROUGH MARKET

ROAST SAYS:

'Haggis doughnuts are coming to London! In honour of Scotland's most famous poet Robert Burns we'll host an exclusive event on January 25 at 6.30pm. Our Burns Night event includes a five-course menu with whisky pairing, a reading with the addressing of the haggis, live bagpiping and, of course, haggis doughnuts!'
The Floral Hall, Borough Market, Stoney St, SE1 1TL.

THREE OF THE BEST

Bread bakers

Bored of your white bloomer?
These three bakeries will rise to the occasion



The Dusty Knuckle

→ Abbot St Car Park, E8 3DP. Dalston Kingsland Overground.

WHAT IS IT... A Dalston bakery-café in a car park that supplies bread to some of London's best restaurants.

WHY GO... For spectacular sourdough with a crispy crust, or sandwiches loaded with porchetta and garlic purée.



Karaway Bakery

→ 2 Montfichet Rd, E20 1EJ. ⚡ Stratford.

WHAT IS IT... An Eastern European, family-run bakery at Westfield Stratford City specialising in traditional rye bread.

WHY GO... To break up your shopping with a top-notch toastie, or to grab a hefty rye loaf to take home.



Little Bread Pedlar

→ Unit 4-6, Spa Business Park, Dockley Rd, SE16 3FJ. ⚡ Bermondsey.

WHAT IS IT... A wholesale artisan bakery under a Bermondsey railway arch that's open to the public on Saturdays.

WHY GO... For sourdough so fresh it's almost creamy. If it's good enough for London's best restaurants, it's good enough for you.

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TimeOut
THE BEST OF THE CITY

Wicked Vegan

→ 14 Hildreth St, SW12 9RQ. ☉ Balham



A DINKY NEIGHBOURHOOD diner, Wicked Vegan deals in the best kind of plant-based cooking: the naughty kind. It's all here, from burgers and wings to mac 'n' cheese or nachos.

Some of it is decent. One highlight was the signature jackfruit burger, with its golden, deep-fried patty (not unlike a breaded fishcake) plus a whole heap of pickles, slaw and salad. And while the style of the aubergine wrap didn't exactly gel with the rest of the menu, it was nonetheless terrific: the warm wrap packed with juicy just-a-hint-of-smoke aubergine and sweet, soft, mildly pickled carrots, plus tomatoes and a generous fist-grab of fresh spinach.

Smoothies were equally great, from the zingy and refreshing Super Green, with its notes of lime and



apple, to the delicately fragrant Merry Berry, its medley of red berries lifted by floral lychee.

Other dishes were fine but forgettable, like soft but mushroomy mac 'n' (cashew) cheese, or bland jackfruit wings, which needed to be dipped. Just make sure you steer clear of the Fooled Pork Wrap (too sweet), the garlic bread (too dry: ours actually arrived burnt), or the bean burger (like chewing on chalk).

Overall, though, this is a nice little addition to Hildreth Street, especially as it also offers cakes and shakes (tip: skip the raspberry and chocolate cake and instead get a tall glass of the creamy Pink Storm, with its subtle notes of strawberry). Staff could not have been lovelier, which in a local spot counts for a lot. ■ *Tania Ballantine*

Lunch for two with soft drinks:
around £50.

WHAT IS IT...

A vegan fast-food joint on Balham's Hildreth Street.

WHY GO...

The aubergine wrap. It doesn't belong on the menu but, man, is it delicious.

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Drink

Edited by Laura Richards
timeout.com/bars @timeouteatdrink



BAR OF THE WEEK

Little Mercies



WHAT IS IT...

A Crouch End cocktail bar from the team behind east London's Bar Three.

WHY GO...

Forget deconstructed cheesecakes – it's all about reconstructed pornstar martinis.

→ 20 Broadway Parade,
N8 9DE. Hornsey rail.

DRINKING PORNSTAR MARTINIS in Crouch End might sound a bit mumsy, but my visit to Little Mercies was a far cry from that. It's as if a sliver of east London has been grafted on to The Broadway – and it's taken to the area very well. It comes from Alan Sherwood and brothers Max and Noel Venning, who launched dazzling cocktail spot Bar Three in Spitalfields just last year. Sherwood is in the driving seat here and worked the small room with enormous energy while we sipped on genius drink after genius drink.

Accents of midnight blue added depth and a maturity to the small room when teamed with the austere concrete bar. Bustle from customers bounced from bare brick walls – this vibrancy was a particular surprise given the low-key entrance (stripped back since its days as a Chinese restaurant). Despite the busy nature of the bar, we were greeted with big grins and waves from staff.

The aforementioned 'Pornstar' (in quotation marks on the menu) was as fun as the original passionfruit-and-prosecco drink. It's apparently the UK's favourite cocktail but, let's face it, it's a little bit dated. This clever reimagining saw

a delightfully sweet combo of passionfruit and vanilla vodkas with wine, verjus and pink passionfruit cordial poured straight from a wine bottle. It looked like sparkling rosé, but gentle bubbles came from carbonation rather than Italian fizz. Frankly, I'd have been happy if they'd left the whole bottle with me.

We also enjoyed a Flower Sour for its light, perfumey notes, and an old fashioned became a party drink rather than a nightcap with the inclusion of caramelised white chocolate. Each cocktail was reasonably priced at £8.50, although just as many punters opted for on-trend draught beers (London breweries Villages and Deviant & Dandy included) served in schooners.

Yes, there was a group of NCT mums in for cocktails when we visited, but I can no longer judge them for ordering a round of 'Pornstars'. This is a whole new look for London. ■



By Laura Richards

Who, to be fair, has never had a pornstar she didn't like.

Escapes

Edited by Ellie Walker-Arnott
timeout.com/daytrips



A perfect day in

IF YOU ONLY DO ONE THING

Wander down the hill from Market Place to the bridge at the southern tip of the village for the ultimate photo op. It's where Castle Combe's combo of weavers' cottages, rippling river and wraparound woodland come together in one picture-perfect vista – especially if you can get the church spire in.

Castle Combe

Fairytale cottages, woodland walks and great pub grub

IF YOU GET the feeling that Castle Combe has been frozen in time, you'd be right. No new houses have been built in this tiny Wiltshire village since the 1600s, and its ancient, honey-hued Cotswold stone cottages remain its standout feature. Factor in valley views, a meandering river and some strict (but welcome) parking restrictions, and it's no wonder it's a regular on lists of the UK's prettiest villages. Visit in winter when it's quiet, and the place is full-on fairytale.

First up

Find the medieval **market cross monument** near pretty **St Andrew's Church**. Pop in and spot the faceless clock then get a snap of Doctor Dolittle's house from the 1967 movie. Drop by the **village hall** too, to see if the sporadic market is on.

Soak up the vibes

Once you've seen this dinky village close-up, view it from the surrounding hills. Wander up The Street from Market Place to follow the **footpath** that trails off to the right and into the **woodland**. The full loop is a gloriously muddy 5.5 miles.

Stop for lunch

Pre-book afternoon tea at **The Old Rectory Tearoom** for a feast of home-baked cakes and savoury nibbles. Or plump for a bacon butty and coffee in front of the roaring log-burner at **The Old Stables**. Otherwise, cobble together a picnic from the **honesty boxes** outside locals' homes.

Drink like a local

Two pubs vie for your attention once you reach Market Place: **The Castle Inn** and **The White Hart**. Both offer freshly pulled pints, roaring fires and charming courtyards, but The Castle Inn wins on fancy food: from a full English to a full-blown roast, it does a great line in hearty homemade fare.

Splash the cash

The ivy-covered **Manor House** is the place to push the boat out. Dine on food fresh from the kitchen garden in the luxury hotel's Michelin-starred restaurant **The Bybrook** or book in for a day of golf on the championship 18-hole course. Too serene? Take a supercar for a spin at **Castle Combe Circuit** – a rite of passage for petrolheads. ■ *Katie Gregory*

WAKE UP HERE

The Old Museum



Arriving in the dreamy village of Castle Combe is fittingly atmospheric. The main route in takes you through a dark tunnel of trees – and The Old Museum, a tiny stone building with cute pastel shutters, is one of the very first you see as you descend the hill. Inside, it's a petite but bright open-plan space with a little log-burner for chilly evenings. The quaint cottage comes with a rare parking space (winner!) and is just a few minutes' walk from the heart of the village. Get up early to have its timewarp charm all to yourself before the crowds arrive.

Ellie Walker-Arnott

→ Castle Combe, Wiltshire. From £110 a night. www.colhamfarm.co.uk

→ Get there: one hour ten minutes by train from London Paddington to Chippenham then bus; around two hours by car.

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