

TimeOut

LONDON

2020: Year of the takeaway pint



...and 49 other things that aren't
you-know-what

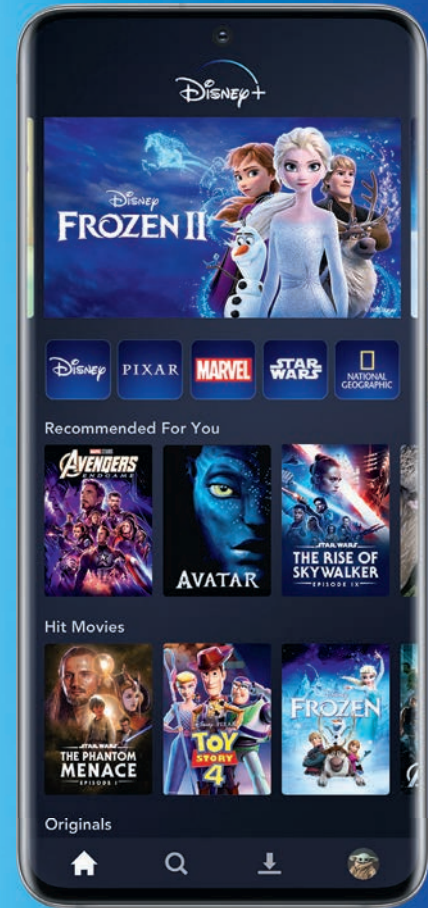
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Inside

This issue of Time Out
in no time at all

Light in the darkness

We've managed to find 50 (fifty!)
things from this frankly rotten year
that we think are worth celebrating

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Yes, chef!

London's greatest gastronomic
gurus tell us what dishes
float their (gravy) boats

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Absolute beast

The NHM's new show mixes nature's
weirdest creations with oddball
fauna from the Potterverse

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Lights, camera, (some) action

Despite cinemas closing, there were
actually some cracking movies this year

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Hello, London

Joe Mackertich
London Editor
@j_mackertich



Despite my notoriously miserable face I am an advocate for positive thinking. Yes, this year sucked. Yes, almost everything life-affirming about London was curtailed, diminished or banned. And yes, now when I unintentionally glance at a reflective surface, I see a disheveled, twitchy gnome where once there stood a giant (or at least, a slightly happier gnome.) But unless we find some way to feel positive about the future, the present becomes a grim place indeed.

This year, unable to rely on the conventional triad of friends, nice food and booze, Londoners had to find new ways to channel positivity. And for some people that involved Time Out. If this was you, then thank you. Thank you for letting us into your life and allowing us to be the conduit that connects you to the impossible, infinite, irrepressible city in which you live.

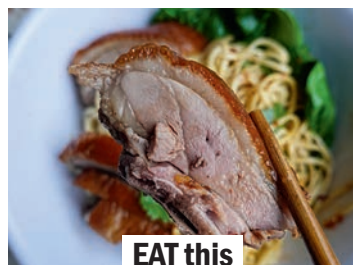
This week also marks my one-year anniversary as editor of Time Out. Despite sub-optimal circumstances, I've had an absolute blast. Chatting to you each week has been my way of staying positive. And if I ruined your favourite magazine, well, it was hardly the worst thing that happened this year, was it? Unless it was. In which case I'm sorry.

THE EDITOR'S ESSENTIALS Three things you have to do in London



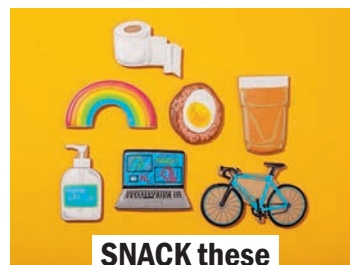
ORDER these

Marvellous Greens & Beans is a south London shop that also helps fund local primary schools. Order one of its great fruit and veg boxes.



EAT this

Rice Guys deliver Chinese food all over London, including this whole marinated Cantonese duck. Just pop it in the oven. What a delight.



SNACK these

Turn the page. Look at that amazing, topical confectionery. Thanks to Wimbledon geniuses the **Biscuiteers** for making them for us.



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Welcome to Page 5G!

Future festivities

Three ways that 5G is going to take Christmas to the next level

You think this Christmas is weird? Wait until we're eating 3D-printed yule logs and reading each other Christmas cracker jokes written by AI. For the last few months, we've been bringing you the eyebrow-raising highlights from Samsung's podcast 'Whatever Next?', which is all about the ways

5G is already transforming (and improving!) every aspect of our lives. Hosts Dr Hannah Fry and comedian Suzi Ruffell have taken listeners on a wild ride through everything from mind-controlled gaming and thinking prosthetics to parties where everyone's a hologram. If you haven't listened to the whole series, then we really recommend you get onto that. The final, festive episode is all about 5G and Christmas, and it's loads of fun...

1 Stress-free shopping

Love it or hate it, we all know that stocking up on gifts is about as relaxing as untangling a big ball of Christmas lights. Thankfully, with its super-fast data processing speeds, 5G might just take the edge off. You could put on VR glasses and allow augmented reality to show you to the location of your purchase – or even create an entirely virtual store to visit in the comfort of your home. You could 'try on' a piece of clothing without actually putting it on (no one needs to know about that novelty reindeer suit!), or in the case of Ikea's Place app, virtually place pieces of furniture in your home.

2 No more late deliveries

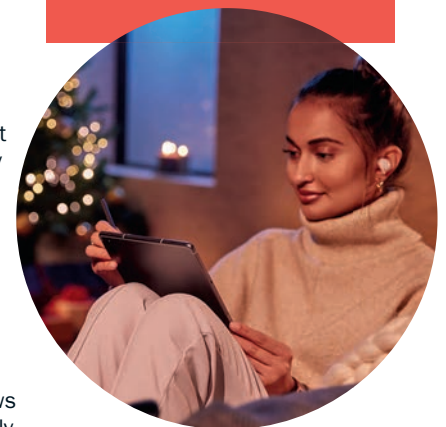
You know the feeling: it's two days before Christmas and that ring light for your Tik Tok-obsessed little sister still hasn't arrived yet. Nightmare! Luckily, the roll-out of self-driving delivery robots is just around the corner thanks to companies like Starship. These electric-powered little friends – which use tiny amounts of energy compared to delivery trucks – autonomously bring your gift over while you track the journey on your phone. Not only will they make deliveries more sustainable and cost-efficient, but they're also great for those who may struggle to carry their own shopping.

3 Bringing families together

If 2020 has taught us anything, it's that humans really, really like being together – but it's not always possible. TeslaSuit has invented a piece of haptic clothing which allows two people to hug remotely. Not only that, but 5G will bring super-fast internet to remote areas without connectivity, so that your online hangs don't have to be so pixelated.

AI TAKES THE TOP SPOT

Given the, ahem, 'quality' of some of the Christmas number one songs over the years, we wouldn't be surprised if AI could write the next festive chart-topper. In this week's episode of 'Whatever Next?', Dr Hannah Fry and Suzi Ruffell will work with experts (some human, some not) to write and record an AI Christmas song. But is it any good? You'll just have to tune in to find out...



Listen to episode eight, 'Festive 5G hugs', on Spotify, Google Podcasts and Apple Podcasts.

→ Search for the 'Whatever Next?' podcast today!

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City life

Edited by Isabelle Aron
@timeoutlondon



The year that took the biscuit

It's been a year of rainbows, Zoom calls and debates over substantial meals. As it crawls to its end, *Chris Waywell* reflects on the ways the pandemic has left its mark on the city



BACK IN MARCH, as the prospect of London going into lockdown loomed, my neighbours Creepy Jon and The Shrieker sprang into action. They got a massive fridge-freezer delivered by AO, and they added a Kryptonite D-lock to the metal security gate across their front door. Then they settled down to wait for the apocalypse.

That seems ridiculous now. I mean, it seemed ridiculous then. Still, at that point no one knew what was coming. My neighbours feared the worst: after the inevitable collapse of society, hordes of zombies on noz would roam the streets, slaving after their frozen Cauldron sausages.

In the round-up shows and end-of-year articles (including ours on pp12-22), 2020 will be the year of the bog roll, the stockpiler, the face mask and the Zoom call. It will be the year of the NHS, the rainbow, the takeaway pint; of the graveyard daily walk, the park heatwave and a lot of dashed dreams, shuttered businesses and isolation.

I'm not surprised that most Londoners have turned out to be decent, kind, and community-minded. I knew that, I'd just taken it for granted. What I am surprised by is my capacity to be moved by it. As a cynical lifetime Londoner, the thought of loving strangers for banging pans and dropping off groceries discomfits me. It's like I've been given an inchoate baby, and I'm not sure what to

do with him. Tell him I'm there for him? Put him up for adoption? Send him to the shop for wine?

In London, against a backdrop of suffering and sadness, there have been innumerable acts of kindness, love and assistance; righteous anger at the Black Lives Matter protests, huge sacrifices by our frontline staff. Everything good that has come out of this year has been about solidarity, sharing and society, and everything bad has been about division, selfishness and blame.

So, yeah, in 2020 I haven't made best friends with my neighbours (not those ones anyway, thank Christ), but I have got an exciting new relationship with London and its people.

Which, all things considered, isn't too bad. ■



Matthew Scott, Co-founder, Hot 4 U

Unabashed optimism to set you up for 2021

Londoners who launched new businesses in the pandemic share their tips for positivity

Imad Alarnab Founder, Imad's Syrian Kitchen

'My time spent travelling across Europe and in refugee camps in Calais gives me a unique perspective. I try to be optimistic, even in difficult times. I've learned that people are survivors and I know that we'll get through this.'

George Hartshorn Co-founder, The Farrier

'You have to find the positives. One silver lining of Lockdown 2.0? The build process of our venue didn't involve manoeuvring a 200-kilo marble bartop and a 500-bottle wine rack through hordes of shoppers in Camden Market – our builders are thanking us for that. This isn't the first or last time people will bounce back from difficult times.'

Eric Yu Owner, The Last Talisman

'You need to be bold, brave and ballsy when opening a new venue, whether that's during a pandemic or not. Stay true to your concept and trust your instincts, there will be lots of opportunity once we come out the other side of all of this. Think glass half-full, not half-empty.'

Matthew Scott Co-founder, Hot 4 U

'We created Hot 4 U to spread positivity through food when the pandemic hit, and we've learned that if you keep each other and those around you optimistic, good things can happen! Having a routine, of sorts, can help too. Starting the day with an espresso martini and a fried-egg sandwich has seen us through this weird old year.' ■

LONDON MAKERS

Launched in Lockdown 1 by Elephant and Castle-based Ricki Lawal, **Selfmade Candle** produces hand-poured candles with eco credentials. The labels are 'seeded', so you can plant them in the jar when the candle's done burning.

→ From £24. selfmadecandle.com



THE VIEW FROM YOU

Time Out readers share snaps of festive window displays in their local neighbourhoods



@cesca_chomps

'@cheeseshopmuswellhill looking so gorgeous and festive.'



@jonboyrussell

'Congrats @graceandthorn, so spot on. Christmas window of the year!'



@mattyjfed

'Shoreditch, London #christmaslights.'



@retuned_style_amanda

'Beautiful Christmas window at our favourite Ealing chemist.'

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WHAT I OWE TO LONDON



‘I was an involuntary whistleblower’

West End trailblazer Arinzé Kene on how the city has shaped his work

ARINZÉ KENE MOVED from Lagos, Nigeria to Hackney in the '90s. He rose to fame with 'Misty', his one-man show about a Black man's experience of gentrified east London. When it transferred to the West End, Kene became only the second Black British playwright to stage a play there. He's appeared on screen alongside Michaela Coel in 'Been So Long', stars in the just-released film 'I'm Your Woman' and will play Bob Marley in new musical 'Get Up, Stand Up!'.

Before anything, I'm Nigerian. That's my true home. But London does feel like home. The older I get, the more I appreciate it. When you grow up here you take for granted how multicultural it is.

The first thing I noticed about London was how cold it was. I was four years old and I moved here with my three siblings. I hadn't seen my dad for a year. He came to London first, working as a cab driver to pay for our plane tickets. We lived in a one-bedroom flat in Hackney.

London is my favourite city. It's been a gift to grow up here, work here and be influenced by the city.

I had my first kiss in Hackney Downs Park. I was 12, her name was Amanda and we met in the park – she was my first summer love. I spent many days and nights playing basketball on the courts there too. It's where I first dunked a basketball.

I could see a change happening in Hackney. Every time I came back to visit my mum when I got older, I'd have conversations with people I'd bump into on the street. A lot of people were moving out of the borough; they didn't feel like Hackney was their home.

I wanted to speak about gentrification and the things that we've lost. That's why I moved back to Hackney and wrote 'Misty'. I felt like I needed to put pen to paper so I could tell that story.

I was an involuntary whistleblower. Being the second Black playwright with a show in the West End felt like something that was inflicted upon me, not bestowed. I don't mean that I didn't want to be, I just mean it wasn't up to me. It felt like my show highlighted the fact that the industry needs to change. It was a rude awakening for theatre.

Performing in 'Death of a Salesman' at the Young Vic was a career highlight. It meant so much to me. [Young Vic artistic director] Kwame Kwei-Armah is like my uncle – he's my mentor and one of my idols. I've looked up to him since I was very young.

'Get Up, Stand Up!' being delayed gives me more time to study Bob Marley and what it's like to be a rasta. We're fortunate that the show is loved by lots of people already, even though we haven't had one performance yet.

[Diversity in] theatre is better than it was 50 years ago. But there were good times that went away before, like the Black theatre companies that existed in the '70s and '80s. Let's keep our eyes on the prize, because while everybody's on the dancefloor, someone could be nicking the freaking coats. ■ *Interview by Niellah Arboine.*
→ 'I'm Your Woman' is on Amazon Prime. 'Get Up, Stand Up!' is due to open at the Lyric Theatre in June 2021.

For more unique looks at London life, head to [timeout.com/stories](https://www.timeout.com/stories)



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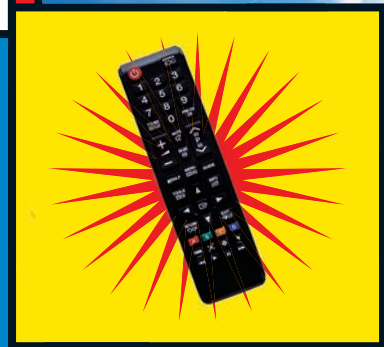


50

cool things we
learned about
London this year

(since it all
went to shit)

A look back at
moments of joy
and excitement
from an ultimately
strange and bad
year. Interviews
Paula Akpan





4 'You can still find unexpected pockets of joy'

Mile End Park

Picked by Ife Akinroyeje, founder of Wanderers of Colour



'Mile End Park and its canal became central to so many of the things I did in lockdown. I'd go for strolls that could last up to three hours because the canal just goes on and on and it's so beautiful. It's so peaceful but it also so communal: there's a community there and you feel it. In June, I went for a really long walk with my housemates, and on our way back, there was someone playing music on one of the balconies. They were DJing and had big speakers that were booming techno in the sun. We dropped our bags and started dancing and all of a sudden, other people around the park did too. It was just such a nice moment to be like, okay, let's dance in the sun and remember that there's other people around. We understood that we'd all gone through a tough time but could still find unexpected pockets of joy.'

→ Clinton Rd, E3 4QY.

5

Drag queens are our city's innovators

Three stars who got creative in lockdown

DollyTrolley launched virtual drag aerobics sessions. Like Joe Wicks with sass and '80s lycra.
→ www.dollytrolleydrag.com

The **Amused Bouche** did meal-kit deliveries with a side of dramatic doorstep musical numbers.
→ [@theamusedbouche](https://twitter.com/theamusedbouche)

Activist queens like **Shakona Fire** use their platforms to amplify the Black Lives Matter movement.
→ [@shakonafire](https://twitter.com/shakonafire)

1 The city's cornershops are heroic

Around the second week of March, supermarkets were swept clean of the basics. All that was left? Nescafé, rollmop herring and taramasalata – piles of the stuff. That's no way to live. So, thank God for the cornershop. Spices? Got 'em all. Loo roll? Er, do we! When everyone was yelling about shortages, these little guys had our back.

→ Find chefs' favourite cornershops in London at [timeout.com/locallifesavers](https://www.timeout.com/locallifesavers)

2 Wine subscriptions aren't just for Waitrose types...

...They're now a titan-sized trend, the outcome of the city's bars, restaurants and wine shops laying dormant.

Pioneered by the likes of Crispin and Top Cuvée, now there's a whole host of start-ups, from Oranj to The Sorting Table sending out curated cases of natty vino – ideal if you don't know a thing about wine except that you like it.
→ www.crispinlondon.com

3 London's pollution problem is solvable

When flights were grounded, roads quiet and a large proportion of Londoners were working/having existential crises from home, scientists recorded significant drops in pollutant nitrogen dioxide. Readings also suggest the capital saw a drop in toxic carbon emissions by almost 60 percent between the start of March and May 2020.

IFE: CELIA TOPPING; CARDAMOM BUN: PAVILION BAKERY



6 Pies can be objects of desire

Yer man Will Lewis was put on furlough in lockdown. Unlike a lot of us, the St John and Brat veteran didn't immediately begin binge-watching Studio Ghibli films. Instead he started what can only be described as a nascent pie empire. Made in Will's kitchen, and delivered by his mates, the pies have become the talk of the town. The menu is ever-changing but the ethos remains the same. Pies are life. Pies are love.

→ www.willyspies.com

7 Andrew Lloyd Webber will never ever die

Love him or loathe him for his music, politics, etcetera, there is no doubt that ALW has done his darndest to try and save the UK theatre industry: as a vocal advocate in front of the cultural select committee, and by ploughing £100k of his – admittedly substantial – fortune into tricking out the Palladium to be social-distancing compliant. The frontage of the Gillian Lynne Theatre, which is due to play host to his next musical, 'Cinderella', currently bears the line 'opening spring 2021 – if they'll let us!'

→ 166 Drury Lane, WC2B 5PW.

8 Londoners care deeply about toilets

This was the year of the wild wee. With public toilets across the capital closed, people answered nature's call, well, in nature. Fines for public urination were handed out, people campaigned enthusiastically for the return of public toilets and, once WCs across the city started reopening, a map of London's public lavs went viral.

9 Rose Glass might be the capital's most exciting film director

While everyone was busy tweeting about Christopher Nolan's baffling 'Tenet', another much less heralded Londoner was doing her bit to save cinema. Rose Glass, an LCC grad, was the mastermind behind the immaculate spiritual horror 'Saint Maud'. Comparisons with Ingmar Bergman and Paul Schrader came thick and fast – and deservedly.

10

This city has a LOT of classical music venues

With crushing loads of people into a room off the cards for the foreseeable, seated culture has had its moment in the sun. One of the biggest winners? Classical concerts popping up all across town. Chamber music spot Wigmore Hall was one of the few music venues to reopen in September. Meanwhile there are also Spotlight Chamber Concerts in Waterloo. We're all highbrow now.



11 A global pandemic was all we needed to make Londoners (perhaps inadvisably) talk to their neighbours



In 2020, Alexandra Sims went from not knowing her neighbours to getting shitfaced with them

In the seven years I've lived in my flat, I never dreamed I'd be drunkenly crawling out of my downstairs neighbours' door at 3am after six bottles of wine over dinner. But, that's exactly what happened in July. Until this year, I'd only known my neighbours as the vaguely familiar faces I'd mumbled odd greetings to in the hall, or a name on a parcel I'd signed for. All that changed in 2020. As we spent more time at home than ever before, our meetings in the hallway became a daily occurrence. Then hallway chats turned

into cups of tea, tea turned into dinner and before we knew it we were drunkenly singing along to Prince in the early hours of the morning. When surrounded by uncertainty, we tend to cling to those closest to us, and for most of us this year that's been our neighbours. We've come together in camaraderie against the difficulties 2020 threw at us through Covid Mutual Aid groups and friendly messages on our local Facebook pages and neighbourhood apps. I signed up to my local Nextdoor app group in March, and over the last few months, I've seen neighbours help each other by collecting shopping, swapping sourdough starters and helping with DIY jobs. One man who lives by me posted a message saying the sight of houses with Black Lives Matter posters in the windows had made him feel more at home in our neighbourhood than ever before. If I didn't feel pride in my little corner of London before, I certainly do now.

WILLY'S PIE: ANDY PARSONS





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Future is an attitude

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12 'The best places in London are the old-school ones'

Adana

Picked by Brodie Meah, co-founder of Top Cuvée



'I live in Bethnal Green, so when I cycle to work in Highbury, I go through Stoke Newington. During lockdown, that cycle between home and work became quite a focal point of my day. Along that route is this gozleme place, Adana, a huge restaurant on Green Lanes that you can't miss.

'With things being so busy at work, we don't really have time to cook for ourselves, so it became my go-to for picking up delicious freshly made food for the team. It's just the right balance of fast food, kind of greasy but not too bad because it's got spinach as well as cheese.

'For me, this period has allowed me to look at my lifestyle and realise that we sometimes get sucked into going out to the fancy new wine bar but some of the best places in London are these old-school places with genuine hospitality and simple, flavoursome dishes. I realised that these are the places I want to go to spend time and money with my wife or close friends.'

→ 25-27 Green Lanes, N16 9BS.



Walking in London is truly great

The three types of Londoner you'll see taking a stroll

The overstretched work-from-homer

You'll spot them out at 4pm, after they finally manage to tear themselves away from Zoom. They're wild-eyed and stomping through a 15-minute circuit, Slacking as they go.

The overprepared hiker

As soon as they realised walking was going to be a big deal, they fired up Blacks and splashed out £800 on a mountaineering 'performance' jacket. They largely spend their time circling Hyde Park, sweating profusely.

The mulled wine walkers

They're looping Broadway Market in big fur coats and lipstick like they're Victorians taking a 'turn'. Glam. But in 30 minutes you'll find them power-walking home, desperate for a piss.

13 Electric vehicles are the future (just not the ones we expected)

In a year of 'travelling as far as we can without getting on public transport', E-bikes and scooters came into their own. Lime, for example, reported a 127 percent uptake in E-bike rides between March and October 2020.

14 Not even a pandemic can keep us away from a car-boot

Ooh, old tat. Touched by hundreds of grubby unsanitised hands over the years. Just what you need during a viral pandemic. Only it is, apparently. Answering demand, Peckham Car Boot carried on virtually through lockdown, running its sales online with sellers DMing in their items. The spirit of Del Boy lives on.

→ @peckham.carboot

15 East Londoners will queue for plants...

When Columbia Road flower market reopened in July, the queues were huge. Like, really big. Think of the line that forms outside Palace on a drop day or Dishoom on a weeknight, except it's Toast-clad couples waiting for cacti and cheese plants. We did all have bleak wfh set-ups to brighten up tbf.

→ Sundays. Columbia Rd, E2 7RG.

16...And for pastry too

We guarantee, if you go to Pavilion on Broadway Market right this minute, you'll find at least five people standing waiting to get their hands on a cardamom bun. It's been that way since lockdown started.

→ 18 Broadway Market, E8 4QJ.

17 Theatre audiences are MASSIVE

Theatre has a reputation as an



elitist artform. But make it free to watch (and force people to stay at home for five months) and suddenly its audience is huge: the National Theatre's weekly free streams of plays achieved a titanic combined global audience of 15 million. Now, if we can just get all those people into actual theatres.

→ www.ntathome.com

19 We all love the goddamn NHS

Furloughed Foodies, Meals for the NHS, The Felix Project, Yard Sale, Crosstown Doughnuts and more provided thousands of meals for NHS frontline staff in lockdown. Change Please, a programme that helps get homeless people trained as baristas started doing free coffees for NHS staff. So did Grind and Paul Bakery. God, we're all so nice, aren't we?





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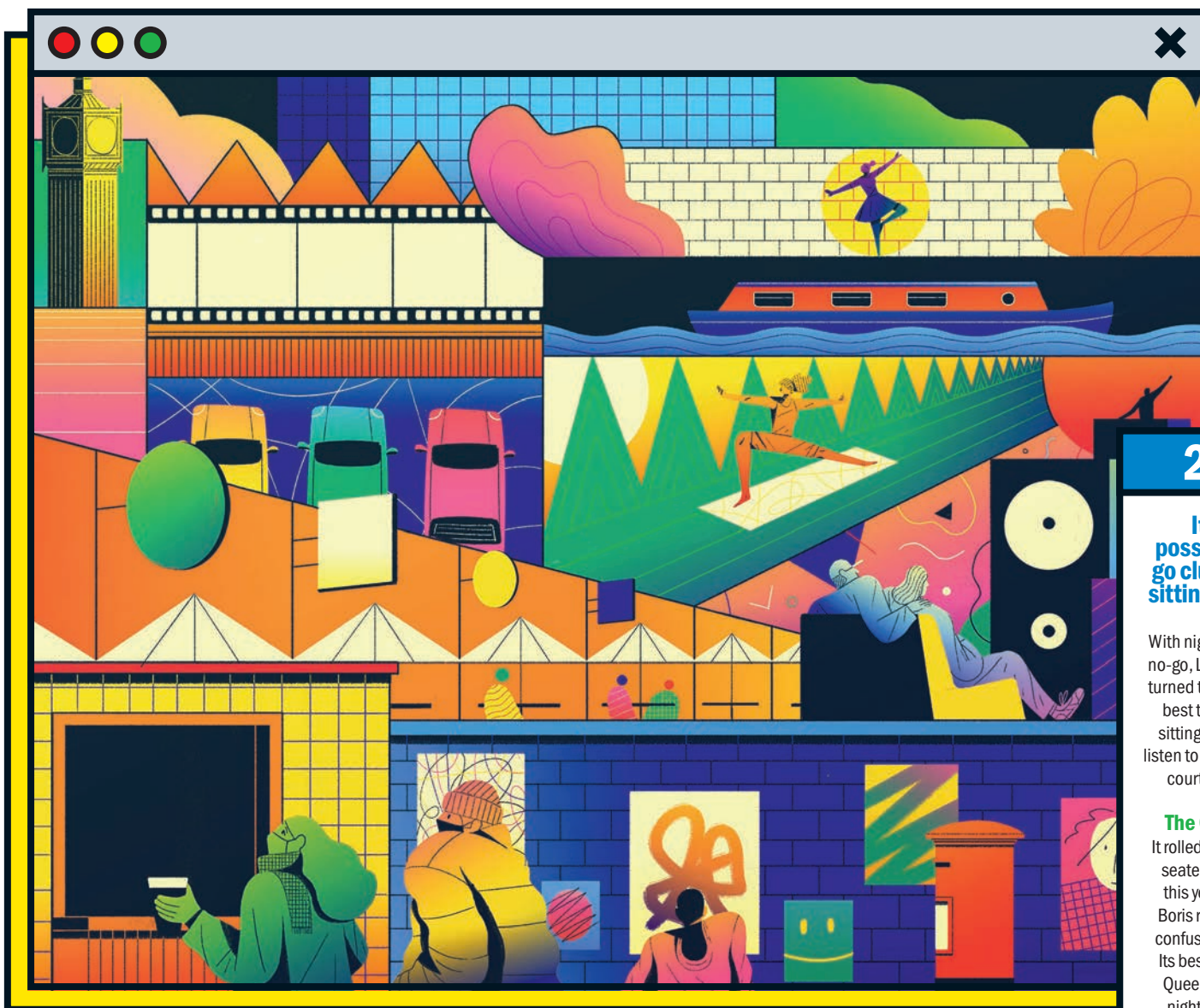
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26

It is possible to go clubbing sitting down

With nightclubs a no-go, Londoners turned to the next best thing. Er, sitting down to listen to DJs play in courtyards?

The Cause

It rolled out more seated events this year than Boris rolled out confusing rules. Its best shout? Queer techno night Adonis became cabaret show Touché.

→ Ashley House, Ashley Rd, N17 9LZ.

Brixton Courtyard

The bit outside Brixton Jamm became a hub of good street food and great DJs, with a line-up curated by Percolate.

→ 261 Brixton Rd, SW9 6LH.

Night Tales

Once a beer garden, it became an actual venue. Its USP? You're allowed to dance there... so long as you wear a mask and stay within a marked box.

→ 14 Bohemia Place, E8 1DU.

20 Londoners will stand in the freezing cold for a pint

The consistently good weather in Lockdown 1 meant that when the takeaway beer idea emerged, the trend popped off. Somebody even created a map that plotted those pint pick-up points. Did we foresee it lasting into the winter? Not necessarily. But some canny boozers – from The Red Lion and Sun in Highgate to The Pelton Arms in Greenwich – even started flogging takeaway mulled wine, too.

→ More at www.timeout.com/mulledwine

21 Outdoor art is essential to the city

Turn any corner in this city, and you'll probably bump into some art. It's always been there, but outdoor art came into its own during lockdown. Being starved of galleries,

people flocked to see the Barbara Hepworth on the side of John Lewis or to walk The Line sculpture trail. You just can't stop Londoners from looking at art.

22 London can do drive-in cinema

Drive-in cinema always seemed like something the Fonz would go to on a balmy American night. But it turns out it's something you can also do in a light drizzle in Hendon. The drizzle aside – peering at a film through a fogged-up windscreen is not great – it filled a gap for anyone yearning for big screens and big snacks. Obviously a lot less so if you don't have a car.

→ www.timeout.com/driveincinema

23 Soho's streets can look as sexy as Paris's

Just in time for the UK's July 4 celebrations (not Independence Day, but the reopening of hospitality after lockdown), Soho was given the green light for pedestrianisation. Officially, the plans were dubbed the 'Soho Summer Street Festival'. Cue *Daily Mail* horror headlines. But the transformed area actually had a rather Continental vibe: demi-pints outside The French House and the like.

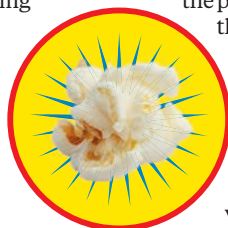
24 Towpaths are ace ballet venues

While London's great stages were shuttered, a group of furloughed Royal Ballet

dancers took matters in their own hands and started staging impromptu dance shows along the Regent's Canal in Hackney. For the dancers, it was a way to perform. For the public, it was a rare chance to see live dance for free. It's not often you hear people screaming 'One more dance. One more dance!' near a light industrial estate.

25 Our parks can double as gyms, WeWorks and clubs

As Covid upended our lives, parks became the centre of everything from socialising to social change. They were settings for birthday parties, work gatherings, alfresco gym classes, impromptu concerts, even protests and illegal raves. We ended up spending so much time in them, some parks put up signs telling us to go home to use the loo.



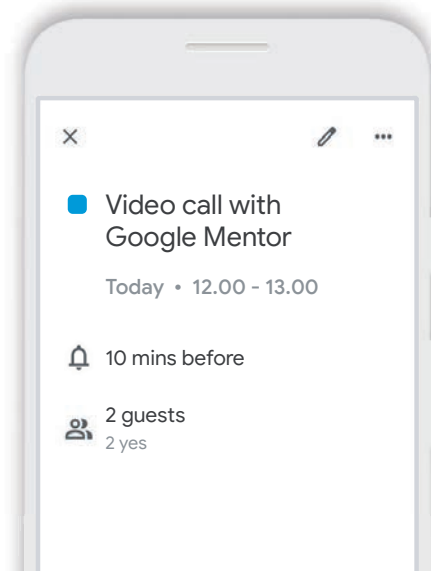


Mahdis Moghadam, owner of Piacere restaurant, London

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27 'You can travel the world virtually'

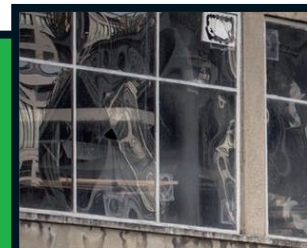
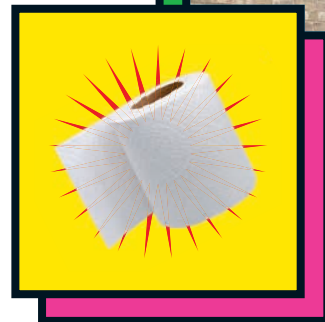
Otherworld

Picked by Leyla Reynolds, curator and creative



'This virtual reality arcade is the best place I've ever been despite me not really being a gamer gal. I initially went on a date there very early in the year with someone awful but I ended up adoring the place. You get a headset you put on alongside a lot of sensors and then you can play a variety of games. It's great for escapism. Like obviously I couldn't travel this year but there's a Google Earth setting where you can just bound around the world. It feels like an adventure during a time when you're quite terrified of most actual interactions with people. I'd love to see more digital interactivity in arts spaces. I know there's so much more we could do.'

→ 336 Acton Mews, E8 4EA.



28

Online shopping doesn't have to be evil

Indies took on the Internet proper this year

For food

Borough Market's online shop expanded to offer nationwide delivery for Lockdown 2.
→ www.goodsixty.co.uk

For books

Pages of Hackney, The Word and Stokeley Bookshop pivoted to delivery. Many shops offered free local drop-offs.
→ uk.bookshop.org

For wine

Peckham Cellars. launched its delivery service in lockdown 1, with same day drops.
→ www.peckhamcellars.co.uk

29 Londoners love their cinemas

Dalston's Rio sold nearly 8,000 memberships between March and August, while the eccentric Prince Charles received £70k of advanced sales ahead of its October reopening.

30 Nicholas Hytner is a theatre-saver

After hauling the National Theatre back into relevance during his golden age in charge, Hytner's new gaff the Bridge was the leading light in what we might call inter-lockdown theatre, flawlessly executing a starry, diverse, 12-play rep season of monologues that accounted for something like half of the theatre this autumn.

→ 3 Potters Fields Park, SE1 2SG

31 The capital is surrounded by brilliant stuff

With proper abroad holidays off the cards, we discovered that, hey, London is close to loads of absolutely great places! Rye, Whitstable, Hertfordshire... And when it came to summer hols? Turns out Cornwall is basically Ibiza with worse weather but better pastry.

→ www.timeout.com/weekendbreaks

32 The city's homelessness problem is fixable

When the UK went into lockdown, the government managed to immediately rehouse London's homeless population. Something they'd previously claimed it would take years to do. It proved that with enough political will (and resources) no-one needs to be homeless.

33 A pandemic won't stop us protesting

As the Black Lives Matters protests erupted around the world in the wake of the killing of George Floyd, our city came out in eloquent solidarity, including a huge demonstration in Hyde Park on June 3 and lots of local, socially distanced gatherings.

34 Connell from 'Normal People' lives in Hackney

May in London had a horny energy. The humidity began to rise, the days stretched into warm nights, and Paul Mescal – aka the man who made thin silver chains hot – decided to go for a run along the canal in Hackney. Shirtless. It started with a tweet or two from some thirsty Londoners. It grew into a full-blown media flurry.

35 Culture can go underground again

Pre-corona, despite virtually everything being billed as 'undiscovered' 'secret' 'exclusive' 'a hidden gem', it felt as though there wasn't a square inch of the city that hadn't been thoroughly mapped, snapped, raked up and reviewed by influencers, Google robots and, well, people like us. (Sorry about that.) But now? Overnight, the pub round the corner is serving takeaway schnapps, the derelict car wash next door has become a socially distant comedy club and your local restaurant is a shop. Suddenly your know-it-all friends don't know it all. Nor do we, probably. Word of mouth is back. And your neighbourhood is full of surprises.

36 Steve McQueen is a London expert

A Londoner right down to his anguished relationship with Spurs, it feels almost counter-intuitive that McQueen hasn't set a film in the city until now. Boy, has he made up for lost time with 'Small Axe'. From Notting Hill to the Old Bailey, via the best London house party committed to film, its celebration of the city's West Indian community fizzes with authenticity and feeling.

→ Available to stream on iPlayer.



38 Supermarket veg is far outshone by our city's veg boxes



Avoiding Tesco led to Isabelle Aron having a revelation

My nearest supermarket is a tiny Tesco (or Shit Tesco, to give it its proper name), which I'm convinced exists solely to troll me. Pre-pandemic, I'd go in there with a shopping list, thinking: This time it'll be different. It never was. Whatever I wanted, they didn't have. Will they have mushrooms today? Nah. Peppers? No way. It was a bit like a lottery, the kind where no one wins anything, ever. During the first lockdown, I was finally freed from the shackles of Shit Tesco by a plucky underdog: the humble veg box. I ordered my first box in April and I've been getting them ever since. Even when

the supermarkets stopped resembling the aftermath of an apocalypse, I couldn't bring myself to revert from my weekly delivery of brown paper bags filled with fruit and veg that actually tasted of something back to subpar supermarket produce wrapped in single-use plastic. There are so many veg delivery services in London (shout out to All Greens, Pale Green Dot and, Paul the Veg Man). Some let you choose what goes in them, but I prefer the set boxes, because sometimes they throw in rogue stuff that I'd never usually buy (if anyone knows what to do with a persimmon, I'm all ears). When the world fell apart this year and all our usual routines went out the window, the unwavering reliability of my weekly veg box was oddly comforting, which is something I've never been able to say about Shit Tesco. Ever.
→ Find delivery services at www.timeout.com/groceries.



37 'People need to be seen'

Lyric Hammersmith Rehearsal Room
Picked by Steven Kavuma, theatre director



'I run a course with young people in theatre at the Lyric Hammersmith. I have fallen in love with a rehearsal room there. It's big and open. I think I feel so strongly about the room because of the students I've been working with. I've clocked that these young people need to be seen. What's happened on their journey, before they came to art, is that they simply weren't. I'm now having to undo and untangle all these complications that people have had drilled into their heads: they're not talented, they're not worthy, that they won't survive in the arts. The openness of the space allows us to educate but also to play games like four square. It doesn't feel tight or unusable – it gives our young people space to breathe, express themselves and play. I think it's important for them to know that they can be silly without feeling like people are watching and scrutinising their every move and this room facilitates exactly that.'

→ Lyric Square, King St, W6 0QL.





39 Bird-spotting in the city is nice



London's flappy things provided thrills for Huw Oliver this year



For me, birds ooze a sense of mood cool. I've always been obsessed. For example, I once had a flock of blackbirds stencilled on my bedroom wall. This year alone, I've read books about the goshawk, the robin and the blakiston's fish owl (very edgy bird – check it out). Yet even more weirdly, despite this unsettling fixation, I've never been fussed about spotting them myself. Until, one day in lockdown, a blue tit landed on my balcony. Then another. And soon there were three pecking at our already stunted veg farm. The next day, I wandered along the River Lea. There were terns, cormorants and swans all nesting within 100 metres of the Blackwall Tunnel. What resilience. What beauty. Like so many others, I turned twitcher overnight. Birds, it strikes me, are the shit IRL too.



40 John Boyega is an actual, earthly legend

When it comes to standing up and being counted, Peckham's John Boyega really took it to the next level at the Hyde Park BLM protest on June 3. The 'Star Wars' and 'Attack the Block' star made an impassioned plea for discrimination and racially motivated deaths in the US and UK not to drop off the agenda, and for the next generation to be properly educated about them. Acknowledging that his outspokenness might not sit that well with Hollywood casting directors, he said, 'Look, I don't know if I'm going to have a career after this, but fuck that.'

41 The Top Cuvée founders should go on 'The Apprentice'

This Highbury bistro pivoted its business model so many times in 2020 we imagine it's dizzy. First it became an online shop selling bottled cocktails from top bars. In summer the team cycled wine to punters. Now, come winter they've launched heat-at-home dinner kits. Busy, busy bees. → 177b Blackstock Rd, N5 2LL.

42 Making burgers is fun it turns out

DIY meal kits have shown us all that fine dining is actually

easy. Not sure what all those stressed-out cooks on 'MasterChef the Professionals' are so worked up about. You just take bits of food out of their containers and heat them up. In any case, the cuisine that Londoners seem to enjoy making the most is the burger: from Burger & Beyond, Patty & Bun, Honest Burger and even Burger & Lobster. → www.timeout.com/diykits

43 Seeing the city on screen will never, ever get old

There's nothing like seeing familiar corners of your

hometown on the telly – especially when you're not allowed to visit them IRL. So it's been a heart-filler to see London getting so much love on screen this year. Michaela Coel's mesmerising 'I May Destroy You' (BBC) took a tour of the West End by night, while 'Gangs of London' (Sky) and 'Industry' (BBC) headed for the filthy-rich corners of the City. And gazing at them was 'Rocks' (Netflix), a film that turned Hackney's rooftops into a viewing station across to that Grand Canyon of cash. Together, they were like an Oyster card for the eyeballs.

Theatres are masters of adaptation

How do you make an old venue new-normal safe?

INTERESTING

Ditch the actors

Donmar Warehouse's 'Blindness' opened early because it was technically a sound installation.

INVENTIVE

Ditch the audience

The eccentric legal provision allows plays to go ahead without audiences during lockdown was proven good by the Old Vic's In Camera series.

INGENIOUS

Ditch the seats

The Bridge and the National Theatre removed two-thirds of seats, with the audience now in isolated pockets.

INCREDIBLE

Install the perspex

Southwark Playhouse put in massive perspex panels between audience bubbles. It was really, really weird-looking, but it felt very 2020.





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Homeless at just 16, Jen* would walk the dangerous streets at night, trying to snatch a few minutes sleep in doorways, but often too scared to close her eyes. Jen's nightmare ended when she found safety and a chance to turn her life around with a room at Centrepont.

After a year of crisis, demand for our services has never been greater. Yet it's become harder than ever to raise the funds we need. This Christmas, we must be there to keep young people like Jen safe from harm. We cannot fail them now. But we need your help.

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CALL: 0800 055 79 47
VISIT: [centrepont.org.uk/help](https://www.centrepont.org.uk/help)

*We use models and change the names of the young people we work with to protect their identity; however all stories are true and as told by the young person. © Centrepont 2020. Centrepont Soho, operating as Centrepont, is a charity registered with the Charity Commission of England and Wales under number 292411 whose registered office is at Central House, 25 Camperdown Street, London, E1 8DZ and a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales under number 01929421.

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45 'Gardening is such an easy thing to return to'

This abandoned allotment in Chingford
Aisha Mirza, DJ and founder of the Misery collective



'I booked a herbalism course for me and my mum. Every month you go to a green space and learn about the herbs that grow there. Rasheeqa Ahmad, a medical herbalist, runs it and I just got really into it.

'She invited me to a weekly gardening project called Community Apothecary and every week, we go to different gardens and slowly turn them into vegetable patches, forest gardens and medicinal herb gardens. Once they're ready, we give them to the local community.

'It's just such a peaceful activity to do and this allotment in Chingford is one of those sites. It had been abandoned for 20 years and was full of brambles – you couldn't even walk in it because there were thorns everywhere. It's taken us about four months to clear it.

'At a time when everything is fucked, gardening is such an easy thing to return to. You can't argue with a plant that has 17 different medicinal uses, is free and easy to turn into something useful.'

→ @communityapothecary.wf



Restaurant merch is the new band merch

Four foodie faves serving #looks

DarkArts Coffee
It does a very, very cool bucket hat.
→ www.darkartscoffee.co.uk

Dom's Subs
Good sandwiches and good T-shirts.
→ www.impeccablesandwiches.co.uk

Monty's Deli
They call it 'menschwear' and it has big pickles on.
→ montys-deli.com

Yard Sale x Mangal
A must-have top to mark the collab.
→ yardsalepizza.com

46 We're all obsessed with nice coffee

In 2020, somehow, going to your local café, buying a cup of Joe and taking it straight home seemed like a reasonable thing to do. Meanwhile, 'Save Pret' became a meme: normality, embodied in a cup of slightly bitter and overpriced liquid.

artists put up works for sale for £200; once they'd made a grand they pledged to spend £200 on another artist. There was a sense that things weren't shut, the focus had shifted.
→ @guts_gallery

47 London art is extremely good at 'going online'

Suddenly, everyone had a virtual gallery. Some places (like the Guts Gallery) even did Instagram shows. That's before we start talking about Zoom round tables and 3D gallery walk-throughs. There was the #artistsupportpledge, where

48 Dominic Cools-Lartigue won't quit

Originally planning to open a big ol' food and culture hub at the start of 2020, Dom did a switch to kindness and started A Plate for London instead. Using his food contacts, he made sure tens of thousands got fed. Nice one. Somehow he also found the time to open food hall-slash-workspace The Tramshed Project in October too.
→ 32 Rivington St, EC2A 3LX.



50 And, finally... the best takeaway food comes vacuum packed

Eating food from a little pouch isn't just for cats, astronauts and Bear Grylls, London's best restaurants swerved Deliveroo to produce heat-at-home kits. Hot 4 U was a pioneer, launching a pouch-only service before finding a home at The Plough. This is its smoked mackerel with leek ragout. ■
→ 23-25 Homerton High St, E9 6JP.

See what Time Out was up to this year at [timeout.com/timein](https://www.timeout.com/timein)

Things to do in London

Written by Katie McCabe and Alexandra Sims
timeout.com/thingstodo @timeoutlondon



PHOTO: ACCIDENTALLY WES ANDERSON

See the photo 'Japan Railways' at a pop-up from Insta feed Accidentally Wes Anderson, which is filled with real-life moments of colour and symmetry that carry that familiar Wes whimsy. **See p26 for more.**

Things to Do

Christmassy evenings

W Christmas at Kew

Just when everyone told you that fomo wasn't a thing in 2020, you've opened Instagram to find a post of your mate gallivanting beneath a tunnel made up of thousands of fairy lights in Kew Gardens, and now you want a slice of the sparkly action too. Luckily, tickets haven't sold out this year for the botanic gardens' annual technicolour trail. As well as photogenic tunnels, you'll find light 'waterfalls' cascading from the Treetop Walkway, illuminated singing roses, neon-lit trees and a big laser-filled lightshow finale reflected in the waters of the Palm House Pond.
→ Kew Gardens. Until Jan 17 2021. From £19.50.

Black Cab Heritage Tours: Magic of Christmas Lights

London's festive facelift of glittering LEDs is the sparkle at the end of the long, dark tunnel we call 2020, and now you can see all the Christmas lights the city has to offer on this private tour in a traditional black cab. From Regent Street's soaring golden angels to the Christmassy enclaves that are Covent Garden and Trafalgar Square, they'll all be included in this two-and-a-half-hour sweep of the city, during which your driver and professional guide will tell you stories about London's festive traditions and point out city secrets. YES, it's expensive, YES, it's ridiculous and YES, people only take black cabs in Richard Curtis films. BUT a dose of festive decadence is just the remedy after a grim year.
→ Until Jan 8 2021. £195 per cab.

C Christmas on the South Bank

The South Bank is usually humming with Christmas cheer in December as people flock there for festive markets and mulled wine. This year, however, it's all looking a bit barren. But, with the mindset that everything looks better when you whack some shiny

lights on it, the Southbank Centre has covered the Thameside promenade in light sculptures to brighten things up. The works include a multicoloured neon canopy by David Ogle weaving through the trees, a mirrorball in the Hayward Gallery foyer by Katie Paterson and a series of large-scale videos projected on to the Royal Festival Hall. The best thing? It's all free to view.

→ Southbank Centre (outside and along the South Bank). Until Feb 28 2021. Free.

Pop-ups

E Accidentally Wes Anderson X The Old Bank Vault

Almost as famous as the films themselves, Wally Koval's Instagram account Accidentally Wes Anderson has been posting pictures of real-world scenes that look straight out of the director's movies since 2017. To celebrate the Insta feed's transition into book form, this exhibition will be displaying some of the photographs from it and revealing the human stories behind the scenes. There'll also be a pop-up shop where you can buy the book, merch and limited-edition prints to make your flat look like the inside of a fondant fancy.
→ The Old Bank Vault. Until Dec 23. Free.

C Wavy Garms XXXmas Pop Up

If we didn't take loungewear seriously before, we've certainly learned better after our year indoors and Wavy Garms is here for our new-found appreciation. The cult streetwear collective is behind this Soho pop-up selling '80s, '90s and '00s gear to support youth homelessness charity Centrepunt. Shop from 20 carefully curated sellers, and see art from Sports Banger and Turner Prize nominee Mark Leckey. There'll also be a DJ Hotline which DJs in the area can ring to offer to play an impromptu set. Who knows who you'll be bopping along to while you shop?
→ Walker's Court. Until Dec 24. Free entry.



'Nine Lessons and Carols'

ONE UNMISSABLE THING



Dodge: Drink, Dine & Dodgems

Somerset House put our skating plans on ice this year, but it's making up for it by turning its courtyard into an arty fairground where you can ride designer dodgems among colourful outdoor installations. There'll even be Dodgem Lates with DJ takeovers, just like the Skate Late days of old.

→ Somerset House. Jan 22-Mar 20 2021.
Free entry, dodgem rides from £5.

Plays to see asap

N 'Nine Lessons and Carols'

Were 'Nine Lessons and Carols' to be revived in 20 years, future audiences might be confused as to why one of the sketches in it simply features a man balefully reciting a recipe for banana loaf. But of course, we know. The Almeida's comeback show is essentially this year in revue. It turns a satirical eye on the cultural detritus of the last few months with an extremely broad mix of styles: from songs to parables to an Edgar Allan Poe-indebted bit about getting a dog during lockdown. This show is 2020, stomped into jagged shards and lobbed forcefully across the stage.
→ Almeida Theatre. Until Jan 9 2021. £10-£35.

N 'The Dumb Waiter'

One of Hampstead Theatre's heftier claims to fame is that it hosted the premiere of Harold Pinter's 'The Dumb Waiter' back in 1960, making this revival an obvious choice to mark its sixtieth birthday. Alice Hamilton directs the unsettling story of two hitmen, Ben and Gus, hiding out in the basement of a derelict building as an electric dumb waiter serves up periodic surprises. Expect a bristling one-act thriller full of absurdist humour and Beckett-esque tension.
→ Hampstead Theatre. Until Jan 16 2021. £10-£37.

W 'Overflow'

The Bush Theatre has finally reopened with a new and extremely timely soliloquy from trans writer, actor and activist Travis Alabanza. Following their smash

2018 performance 'Burgerz', which focused on trans visibility, Alabanza's latest show is a monologue about Rosie, who reflects upon the encounters – good and bad – that she's had in women's toilets, performed by transgender actor and poet Reece Lyons. The Bush Theatre's reputation for urgent new writing is standing strong.
→ Bush Theatre. Until Jan 16 2021. From £20.

Low-key Christmas club nights

N Good Life's Christmas Banquet

Our social lives revolve around substantial meals now, so it's no surprise club nights have turned into banquets. Leeds-based party starters Good Life are behind this immersive festive dinner party, which promises London's best DJs spinning house, disco and Christmas classics AND a brined turkey dinner. Each ticket also includes a donation to Crisis at Christmas. Put your drumstick in the air like you just don't care.
→ Costa del Tottenham. Dec 19. £30.

E Backto95 Festival Brunch

On the third day of Christmas Backto95 will give to me: Six MC hosts. Fourteen eager DJs. Blaring house and garage. Caribbean street food. And BOTTOMLESS *ruuuuuuum* cocktails.
→ E1. Dec 27. £27-£45.

Storytelling nights

N Midwinter Tales with The Embers Collective

Cold, dark winter nights are perfect for gathering together and telling tales – and, frankly, if a good story can transport us from the nightmare that is 2020, we'll take it. Storytelling troupe The Embers Collective will be aiming to send us to far-off lands and days of yore with their enigmatic yarns accompanied by live music.
→ Dona Bar. Dec 20. £15.

W Winter Solstice with London Dreamtime

Had it up to here with festive cheer? London storyteller Vanessa Woolf will be whisking a group of grinchers off to a secret location for an evening of ghost stories and eerie midwinter folklore set to a live soundtrack of '80s tunes.
→ Secret location. Dec 21. £5.

Drunk painting

W Paint London at Christmas

Van Gogh had absinthe, so why shouldn't you have a glass of pinot? PopUp Painting is inviting Londoners to get creative with a glass in one hand and a paintbrush in the other by recreating a scene of Trafalgar Square at Christmas. Going off-piste is encouraged – and likely after a couple of jars.
→ Britannia, Kensington. Dec 18. £35.99.



BOOK NOW

Sian Clifford goes digital



▶ 'Good Grief'

Best known for her iconic turn as Phoebe Waller-Bridge's uptight sister Claire in 'Fleabag', Sian Clifford follows up her smash telly hit, 'Quiz', with 'Good Grief', a -TV-theatre hybrid that's launching this February, with tickets available on the Time Out site now.

You really served your time in the London theatre trenches before 'Fleabag', didn't you?

'Yeah, yeah: I've been a professional actor for 14 years, I would say I spent 12 of them in theatre. It's really nice to be celebrated for "Fleabag" and to be a part of that world, but theatre is where it all began for me.'

What is 'Good Grief'? Is it a digital play, basically?

'It's neither film nor theatre; it's a hybrid, that's why it's so thrilling to be part of it, something that's so innovative and has been born entirely of this chaos.'

And regardless of genre, what's it about?

'It's a two-hander by Lorien Haynes, an American writer, [performed by me and] the excellent and formidable Nikesh Patel. It's sort of hard to articulate, but it's really thrilling, a bit of a brain maze, structured around the stages of grief.'

What's the thing you're looking forward to doing the most in London when this is all over?

'Going to the cinema and going to the theatre: those are my happy places. The image I have saved on my phone is the outside of Picturehouse Central: it's an aspiration to what we can return to, because normally I live in that building. Getting back there – that's my goal.' ■ Interview by Andrzej Łukowski

→ 'Good Grief' is online from Feb 15 2021. Tickets from £29 at www.timeout.com/goodgrief.

Meet the trailblazers

These three kind-hearted individuals and their teams have come up with creative ways to combat the homelessness crisis

According to the housing charity Shelter, a staggering 280,000 people were homeless in England in 2019. As winter sets in, Covid-19 continues to make life even more difficult for the UK's homeless population. Thankfully, there are fantastic organisations out there empowering people to break the cycle of homelessness through training programmes, mentorships and the ability to open a bank account. In partnership with HSBC UK, we're telling their stories.

Lou Walker is a customer experience manager within HSBC UK's Financial Inclusion and Vulnerability Team. She helps to run its No Fixed Address Service, which has allowed more than 500 people to gain access to a bank account since 2019 in partnership with Shelter and other local charities.

'If you have no fixed address, it can be very difficult to open a bank account. And if you don't have a bank account, it's much harder to access benefits like Universal Credit, receive salary payments or secure a tenancy. It's a vicious cycle. The No Fixed Address Service was a follow-on to our Survivor Bank Service, where we opened

bank accounts for victims of human trafficking and modern slavery. It was such a success that we used it as a blueprint for other groups without accounts. Since organising a pilot in Liverpool in 2019, we have opened in excess of 500 accounts across the UK in collaboration with Shelter, Crisis and local charities like Centrepoint. We are all human and deserve to be treated in the same way – it's amazing what a difference a chat can make. We have a member of the HSBC UK team who had been passing a man experiencing homelessness on the street corner near his office every day for years. He always stopped for a chat, and bought him a coffee and a sandwich. Once the service had launched, he provided support by contacting a local charity and opening a bank account for him. He made such a difference to this person's life. We all can.'

→ Visit www.hsbc.co.uk/no-fixed-address.



'We've pioneered a process that allows people with no fixed addresses to open bank accounts'

'I wanted Fat Macy's to give people a sense of pride and purpose'

Meg Doherty is the founding director of social enterprise Fat Macy's, a catering business and supper club that employs young Londoners living in temporary accommodation and trains them in hospitality.

'About five years ago I started working in a homeless shelter. What I found really surprising was how hard it was for people to move out of hostels once they'd gotten in. It's very difficult to save money for a rental deposit, as hostels can be way over £1,000 a month and usually need you to be on full benefits (which means you can't work). It also surprised me that loads of people experiencing homelessness were young – 18 to 35. We came up with the Fat Macy's programme through conversations with people living in hostels, and

what kept coming up was a sense of progression – having a pathway. So, for every 50 hours of the traineeship at Fat Macy's, participants can apply for a grant to cover a reward of their choice. For some, that's getting their driving licence renewed. In the last two years, we've helped people to get jobs and buy things like bedding and pots and pans for their first flat. We've just got the keys to our first permanent space in Victoria, and we'll be opening it as a café-deli space and expanding our training programme.'

→ Find out more at www.fatmacys.org.



Fat Macy's



Paul Ryan is the director of Café Art, a social enterprise which helps to connect people experiencing homelessness with the wider community through art.

'In 2012, I was introduced to Michael Wong, who had set up Café Art. He was helping people who were homeless express their creativity by framing their work and putting it on the café's walls. In 2013, we expanded to create the annual MyLondon calendar, where we hand out disposable cameras to people facing homelessness and they get seven days to take photos of the London that they love. Then we print the calendar and people can sell it and get 50 percent of the sale price, like *The Big Issue* vendors do. Not only do they get to earn an income from their own photography, they also learn entrepreneurial skills and gain confidence by talking to people and telling their stories. This year, due to Covid-19, we couldn't do the project in the way we normally would, so instead we asked the public to vote on the 12 best photos that we've collected over the years.'

→ Find out more and order a MyLondon 2021 calendar at www.cafeart.org.uk.



'It's about empowering people through giving them confidence'

Things to Do

Fake snow

C Leadenhall Market

We've had almost a full year of hastily recreated real-life experiences, so why stop at snow? At Leadenhall Market, we won't just be getting the usual sparkling archway of Christmas lights, oh no. This time, there will be a full indoor snow installation, plus a snowflake projection, just to hammer home that 'white Christmas' message. If you're one of the many Londoners who won't be able to travel home for the holidays, a trip to Leadenhall will help you feel ostentatiously festive. There's a wine bar, a French brasserie, and 35 shops of the 'boutique' persuasion, all contained in a big, airy Victorian space.

→ Snow installation runs Dec 15-18 and 21-23. Free.



C Covent Garden Market

Not content with its 60-foot Norwegian spruce tree and 115,000 festive lights, whoever owns Covent Garden Market (that'll be Capital & Counties Properties) has decided it was just not Christmassy enough. After a whimsical addition of a big Lego installation, a grotto and a mulled-wine festival, it was recently announced that there will be daily (fake) snowfall on the market. Rest assured, the snow is sustainable. It won't taste good on your tongue, but it looks damn good in pictures.

→ Until Jan 3 2021. Snowfall takes place daily, on the hour, noon-6pm. Free.

NYE planning

N The Cause NYE Breakfast Club

With venues required to shut at 11pm, most of the capital's parties will be giving the traditional midnight countdown a miss this year. The Cause, however, has got a bit creative and decided to do it at midday instead. Join them from 8am for a bottomless brunch celebration with Bloody Marys, Bucks Fizz and some early morning tunes. If you manage to keep going until 'real' midnight, we salute you.

→ The Cause. Dec 31. From £60 for a group of six.

S F*ck 2020

It's only been open for three years, but The Prince of Peckham has already got a rep for throwing a banging NYE celebration. See out one of the worst years in living

memory at the most raucous party possible with a night of dancehall, hip-hop and R&B tunes from DJs Oneman and Plastician, and substantial grub from White Men Can't Jerk.

→ The Prince of Peckham. Dec 31. £15.

C Rave to the Moon

Featuring virtual sets from a bunch of massive names including Rob Da Bank, Beardyman, DJ Yoda and Heartless Crew (pictured above), this online fundraiser is aiming to be the biggest virtual rave of 2020.

→ Dec 31. Free. ravetothemoon.tv

N Roller Nation's Goodbye to 2020 and Good Riddance! New Year's Eve bash

Did you take up roller skating during lockdown? Try this retro NYE disco on wheels, where you'll glide into a better year with the help of '70s, '80s and '90s anthems. Skate hire, a glass of champagne and your own private booth are included in the ticket price.

→ Roller Nation. Dec 31. From £50 for two people.



Rave to the Moon

Exhibitions to see asap

C 'Bags: Inside Out'

From Birkins to backpacks, frog purses to red ministerial boxes, this brand new exhibition at the V&A explores the style, function, design and craftsmanship of bags from the present day going all the way back to the 1500s.

→ V&A. Until Sep 12 2021. £12.



'Bags' at the V&A

C Lynette Yiadom-Boakye: 'Fly in League with the Night'

If there's one art exhibition you should motivate yourself to visit during that long, lethargic stretch between Christmas and New Year, it's Lynette Yiadom-Boakye's 'Fly in League with the Night'. In this huge solo show, you're greeted by mysterious portraits that smile and grin and frown and laugh, and you never know why. In a world full of opinions and hot takes, her skillfully executed paintings create a universe with no answers, no end points, just a million stories to lose yourself in.

→ Tate Britain. Until May 9 2021. £13.

C Michael Clark: 'Cosmic Dancer'

The Barbican's smart, funny and slightly wonky retrospective of choreographer and dancer Michael Clark is closing in a handful of days, so get moving! Even if you have zero knowledge of Clark as a dancer, his punky visuals and flashes of hectic 1990s London club culture will draw you in.

→ Barbican. Until Jan 3 2021. £15-£17.

Grown-up pantos

S 'Pricked'

South London's legendary LGBTQ+ venue The Royal Vauxhall Tavern wasn't going to let something as trivial as a global pandemic ruin the noble Christmas tradition of its (adult) pantomime. This year's creative reinterpretation of 'Sleeping Beauty' features a sex-crazed pop-star princess and a raven with identity issues.

→ The Royal Vauxhall Tavern. Until Jan 7 2021. £20.

C 'Alice in Streamingland'

If you've ever drifted off midway through a TV show binge (who hasn't?) you'll identify with the protagonist in Phoenix Arts Club's adult panto, who falls down the rabbit hole into Interfloxland and encounters a variety of characters strangely similar to those of 2020's biggest streaming hits. Our money's on Olivia Colman as the Queen of Hearts (okay, probably not the *real* Olivia Colman, she's an Oscar-winner now, jeez).

→ Phoenix Arts Club. Until Jan 3 2021. £20.

Park to pub

E Walthamstow Wetlands to The Ferry Boat Inn

If you're looking for a winter walk that's low effort, high reward, this is it. Walthamstow Wetlands is a good-looking slice of London: it's got reservoirs that reflect the skies like mirrored glass, an old coppermill pump house and confident geese that insist on blocking the paths. It's also a very well-protected habitat, which means there's only so much of it you can explore. Take yourself on a tour from the Coppermill Lane entrance, and go on a leisurely 20-minute or so stroll to the main entrance, where The Ferry Boat Inn awaits (across a very busy road). It gets absurdly busy, especially on a Sunday, so for Christ's sake book a table. Only then can you get that first sip of a sweet, crisp post-walk pint, safe in the knowledge that you don't deserve it one bit.

→ Start at Coppermill Lane entrance, Walthamstow Wetlands. The Ferry Boat Inn, Ferry Lane.

Forest to pub

E Epping Forest to The Owl

Traipsing through the thicket of Epping Forest while staring at Google Maps in place of a compass is as close as many of us will get to being an explorer. But you know what? That's okay, because it's one of the easiest ways to plan your route

to The Owl pub. Enter the forest via Chingford Green, follow Bury Road, and hang a right into the trees. The Google Maps route is easy to follow from here and will take you around 35 minutes. You need to exit the forest to find The Owl at the top of the (fairly steep) Lippitts Hill, but when you get there, you'll discover a traditional, dog-friendly pub with a spacious beer garden.

→ Start at Chingford Overground. The Owl, Lippitts Hill.

N Highgate Wood to The Bull

Highgate Wood is an exceptionally pretty and ancient woodland, full of gnarly oak trees, hornbeam and evergreen holly. It also only takes around 25 minutes to do a 2km loop of the place, unless you have a child (there's a very good playground, and once they're in it, you're not leaving). But, as long as everyone is of drinking age, you can enter at Archway gate, absorb that wood, return, and walk the ten minutes to The Bull on North Hill, a decent gastro-type pub with countryside leanings. Think weird beers and gin-cured salmon with soda bread.

→ Start at Archway Gate, Highgate Wood. The Bull, 13 North Hill.



'Alice in Streamingland'

**THIS YEAR
SUCKED.
NEXT YEAR
WON'T.***

* As long as you subscribe to our newsletter and be the first to know about openings, offers and all sorts of tasty London tidbits. Sign up at timeout.com/london-signup

TimeOut



London for kids

Big days out

C 'Antarctica 3D' at Imax
Local cinema still closed? Go and overwhelm your senses with an extremely disorientating dose of film at the Science Museum's newly reopened Imax. It might seem gimmicky, but this is one of only two screens in Europe to mix high-end digital and analogue, housing both an Imax laser and 70mm film projector. Chances are no kids will care about this dull cinephile tech info – they'll just want to see some cool shit on a massive screen. And they will get it: right now the Imax is showing BBC Earth documentary 'Antarctica 3D', which means lots of penguins. In 3D.
→ Science Museum. Dates and times vary. £12, £10 child.

S Queen's House Ice Rink
Covid toppled London's usual outdoor rinks one by one, but the ice arena at the Queen's House in Greenwich is still standing. The giant rink has those little penguin skating aids for kids who are nervous on the ice, but most importantly, there's a café that serves hot chocolate.
→ Queen's House. Until Jan 24 2021. From £14.50, from £7.25 child.

Kids' theatre

N 'The Gruffalo's Child'
If you have kids, chances are you can recite a sizable percentage of 'The Gruffalo's Child' by heart. It's a rare children's book in that it manages to keep its energy and charm after

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Xmas trails



W Christmas Fairy Trail

If your kid is just about young enough to believe fairies might be real, keep the magical ruse alive on this sprite trail across the Hampton Court Palace gardens.
→ Hampton Court Palace. Until Jan 3 2021. Included in palace admission: £24.50, £12.20 child.



S Nine Elms Advent Calendar

The windows of 24 businesses in Nine Elms have been decorated by local artists working to the theme of 'Light in the Darkness'. See if you can find them all.
→ Start at The Black Cab Coffee Co. Windows open until Jan 2 2021. Download a map at www.nineelms.org



N The Magic of Christmas

London Zoo's festive trail tasks kids with gathering intel to help Santa decide on presents for the animals, which means you can relax while the kids rack their brains over what's the best gift for a flamingo.
→ London Zoo. Until Jan 3 2021. Admission: from £23.64, from £15.36 child. Download the trail card at www.zsl.org

multiple reads, making it prime source material for a long theatrical run. Tall Stories' musical adaptation of Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler's award-winning sequel to 'The Gruffalo' (which opened in the West End in 2017) is packed with inventive storytelling and furry jumpsuits from the cast of three. It's now showing at a socially distanced Ally Pally for 2020.

→ Alexandra Palace. Until Jan 3 2021. £12-£18, ages three-plus.

🎭 'Nutcracker Delights'

Two things the pandemic seems to have been unable to shut down (so far, touch wood, pray to the heavens): a few pantomimes and 'The Nutcracker', which is returning to the London Coliseum in this heavily truncated 'best of'-style version from English National Ballet.

Running at just 75 minutes with no interval, it's clearly an adaptation to suit our 'troubled times', but will no doubt up the family-friendliness of an already family-friendly affair.

→ London Coliseum. Until Jan 3 2021. £10-£55.

Santa meet 'n' greets

👤 Underbelly's Santa at Home

Stressed about the idea of crowding into a grotto? Cut your losses and book an online audience with the big man instead. These calls will set you back a hefty £54 for up to six kids, but it is a touch more personal than being ushered away with a repurposed Kinder Egg toy from the grotto present pile.

→ Until Dec 24. From £54. www.santaathomeofficial.com



🎨 National Gallery Santa's Grotto

If your kids aren't quite old enough to appreciate the gory Baroque art of Artemisia Gentileschi, you can always visit the National Gallery's Christmas Experience to meet Santa. If your visit is before 5pm, you'll get access to the Gallery Collection too.

→ The National Gallery. Until Dec 23. £10 adult and child aged 12-plus (including refreshment), £20 child under 12 (including gift).

ONE UNMISSABLE THING



'Fantastic Beasts: The Wonder of Nature'

Real animal specimens sit alongside magical creatures from the world of Magizoologist Newt Scamander at this exhibition for 'Potter'-obsessed children.

→ Natural History Museum. Until Aug 2021. £22, £13.25 child.

FANTASTIC BEASTS: © THE TRUSTEES OF THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM, LONDON

Food & Drink

timeout.com/eat



Bacon butter burger
at Burger and Beyond

The best thing I ate this year

London chefs reveal the restaurant dishes, meal kits and takeaways they were obsessed with in 2020

Unagi meal kit at Makes Miso Hungry

'Yoko, who makes these amazing Japanese meal boxes, isn't a trained chef, she just has a passion to deliver the very best. It's all about the attention to detail. Yoko personally goes to New Covent Garden Market to hand-select the fruit and vegetables, she picks the sansho leaves from her family garden, she works directly with fishermen at Billingsgate to get the very best fish. Easily the best "cook at home" box I've eaten – those chefs better watch out.' *Sven-Hanson Britt, Homestead in London City Island*
→ www.makesmisohungry.com

Roast chicken, morels and vin jaune at Noble Rot

'The best non-lockdown meal would probably have to be the chicken I had at the new Noble Rot in Soho – it was WILD. When you leave a

restaurant and wake up the next day thinking about their roast chicken you know they're doing something very right! A very healthy portion for two with leftovers. The sauce was so good we asked for seconds!' *Holly Chaves, Wine & Rind*
→ Noble Rot, 2 Greek St, W1D 4NB.

Lobster and wagyu fat at Frog by Adam Handling

'My best dish of the year? That's a hard one. I would probably say lobster and wagyu fat by Adam Handling was mega. Adam is a buddy of mine and one hell of a chef.' *James Cochran, 12:51*
→ Frog, 75 Sloane St, SW1X 9SG.

Luto meal kits at Luto

'We auctioned off a vintage restaurant sign at Top Cuvée (starting bid was one Capri Sun) and Mary eventually won the bid in exchange for one of her Luto Diner



Lobster at Frog

kits. Super-fresh tasty Filipino food, really stand out stuff like pork adobo and chilled squash ginataang. We will be seeing a lot more of them next year I'm sure.' *Will Blank, Top Cuvée*
→ www.lutolondon.com

Eggplant sambal and arepa with bergamot labneh at Scully

'A simple dish yet very complex in flavour, the pairing of all these ingredients from different parts of the world is just a stroke of genius. I had this dish at the restaurant but it's available as a DIY kit as well.' *Marwa Alkhalaf, Nutshell*
→ Scully, 4 St James's Market, St. SW1Y 4AH.

Hazelnut pain au chocolat at Miel Bakery

'One of the best-looking breakfast pastries I've eaten. Despite not being a breakfast person it's hard to avoid Miel on my morning cycle into Soho! Shaheen and her team do some of the best bread and pastries you can find outside Paris. When you do make the trip, make sure you pick up a half dozen or so caneles, chocolate tarts and cookies. Thank me later.' *Karan Gokani, Hoppers*
→ Miel Bakery, 57 Warren St, W1T 5NR.

Houmous, fish tagine, amba tahini, dill and harissa oil at Erev

'Shuk is an Israeli market stall in Borough market serving warm pita and salads. On Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings they turn into Erev, an outdoor restaurant serving Israeli-inspired dishes. Absolutely everything they serve is delicious but my favourites are the beetroot, horseradish, orange and dill; the smoky aubergine, tomato, labne, mint and toasted pumpkin seeds; and the houmous with fish tagine, amba tahini, dill and harissa oil. It's the best houmous in town.' *Jun Tanaka, The Ninth*
→ Erev, Borough Market Kitchen, SE1 9AG.

Baby-chicken tandoori at Dastaan

'Dastaan on the Kingston Road was recommended to me a while ago but I never got round to going. I discovered they did takeaway in lockdown and it was a no-brainer. It's run by two ex-Gymkhana chefs. The baby-chicken tandoori [it's no longer on the menu] was my favourite. Everything is delicious.' *Mark Kempson, W8 and Wild Radish*
→ Dastaan, 447 Kingston Rd, KT19 0DB.

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Food & Drink

Bubble sundae at Tsujiri

'The most exciting dish has to be the bubble sundae from Tsujiri in Chinatown. They're still open even in these times. It's the addictive combination of cornflakes and cream-matcha soft-serve that keeps me going back.' *Joshua Owens-Baigler, Angelina*

→ Tsujiri, 33 Newport Court, WC2H7PQ.

The bacon butter burger meal kit at Burger and Beyond

'It's brilliant. It's really simple. I learned simple tricks on how to cook burgers from doing it, and most of all it tasted absolutely incredible. I've ordered it twice already! I think I saw it on Instagram. I'd always wanted to eat at the restaurant but never got round to it, so this was a good chance to taste what they do.' *Peter Sanchez-Iglesias, Decimo*

→ www.burgerandbeyondshop.co.uk/diy-kits/

Langoustine at The Connaught

'Earlier this year, before all this madness, I had the pleasure of enjoying the most superb langoustine dish from the wonderful Helen Darroze at The Connaught. It was out of this world:



Hazelnut pain au chocolat at Miel Bakery

buttery langoustine flesh marinated in ponzu with delicate peppery radish – divine! Classy, and carefully executed. It will stand out in my mind for years.' *Tom Aikens, Muse*

→ The Connaught, Carlos Place, W1K 2AL.

Braised pork bao at Rice Error by Bao

'My girlfriend and I have been religiously having one Deliveroo

a week as a Sunday-night treat. We've been trying all different types of cuisine and this little beauty came out on top for me. The braised pork came with soy pickled cucumber, soy egg yolk, spring onions and chi shang rice. I also ordered a side of Taiwanese fried chicken and hot sauce. The pork was soft, the rice was perfectly sticky and the chicken wings were packed full of

flavour. I was also really impressed by the packaging the food came in: a smart, wooden sliding box. Highly recommended!' ■ *James Toth, Cornerstone*

→ www.deliveroo.com

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PECKHAM

NAÏFS SAYS:

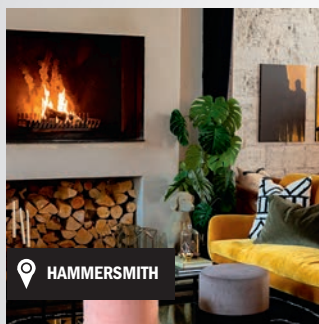
'Within easy reach of Queen's Road and Peckham Rye station, Naïfs is redefining vegetarian and vegan cuisine with a carefully crafted, seasonal menu and a thoughtful, creative drinks offering. Family-run, here you will find a warm welcome and relaxed atmosphere in which to enjoy an adventure in food and drink.' *56 Goldsmith Rd, SE15 5TN.*



CAMBERWELL

GOOD NEIGHBOUR SAYS:

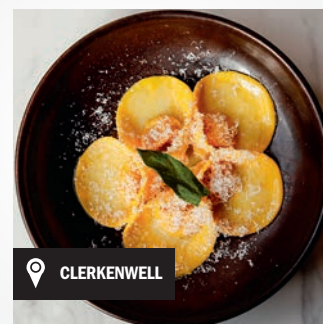
'Good Neighbour brings the perfect local hangout to Camberwell, offering interesting and unique wines alongside a great selection of house cocktails and local craft beers. The menu boasts all manner of cheese, charcuterie and wine-bar classics as well as delicious larger plates for those looking for a more serious dining experience.' *21 Camberwell Church St, SE5 8TR.*



HAMMERSMITH

KINDRED SAYS:

'Kindred is the members' space that west London deserves. Situated in the Grade II-listed Bradmore House, it offers a genuine warm welcome to local Londoners looking to upgrade their WFH game, meet like minded people, and spend some precious moments with their bubble in the on-site restaurant, The Cellar.' *Queen Caroline St, W6 9BW.*



CLERKENWELL

LUCA SAYS:

'Luca, in the heart of Clerkenwell, serves high-quality ingredients from around the British Isles and Italy: seasonal produce such as shrimps from Morecambe Bay, grouse from Yorkshire, langoustines from Scotland and cheeses from across the UK. It is food that observes the established traditions of Italian cooking, but breaks the rules a little.' *88 St John St, EC1M 4EH.*



SOUTH

The Blythe Hill Tavern

Expect heaps of space (and heaters), a handsome number of real ales on tap and a fetching marquee to protect you from rain. There's pizza at the weekend too.

What's the actual pub like?

Lovingly rammed with Irish sporting memorabilia.

→ 319 Stanstead Rd, SE23 1JB.

The Duke of Edinburgh

The Duke's got a mammoth outdoor space with heaters, plus a heady combo of meat from White Men Can't Jerk and beers from Brixton Brewery and Five Points.

What's the actual pub like?

Absolutely nothing like the actual Duke of Edinburgh.

→ 204 Ferndale Rd, SW9 8AG.

EAST

The Crooked Billet

Head down to this spacious beer garden if you fancy a bit of crab bisque with your alfresco IPA. The covered booths with patio heaters are prime real estate on grim days.

What's the actual pub like? On the gentrified side but not too much.

→ 84 Upper Clapton Rd, E5 9JP.

The Crown and Shuttle

Does a beer garden need to have grass? If you're The Crown and

Open-air bevs

The best London pub gardens for outdoor winter drinking

Shuttle, the answer to that question is a resounding: 'No'. And we'd have to agree, considering the amount of space (and the range of refreshing lagers, pilsners and pale ales) available at this partially covered and heated terrace.

What's the actual pub like? Hip in a

'we've got exposed brick and filament bulbs' kind of way.

→ 226 Shoreditch High St, E1 6PJ.

NORTH

The Faltering Fullback

Yes, this pub is named after a rugby position but don't let that prevent you from cosying up under the heaters in its four-storey beer

garden. It does surprisingly good Thai food too.

What's the actual pub like?

Big sports bar vibes.

→ 19 Perth Rd, N4 3HB.

The Spaniards Inn

Come here for one of London's best-looking beer gardens – a kind of manic pixie dream landscape, full of heaters and sheltered tables.

Expect to see it played by Zooey Deschanel in a romcom imminently.

What's the actual pub like?

Timeless. Mellow wooden floors and an embarrassment of fireplaces.

→ Spaniards Rd, NW3 7JJ.

The Scott Head

This pub's outdoor seating area (which you can book) isn't the biggest, but it'll make you feel warm and welcome. Literally. There are hot water bottles handed out. And you can find chef Nuno Mendes here on Saturdays serving up brunch.

What's the actual pub like? Choked with kitsch dog paintings like a really lovely big kennel.

→ 107a Culford Rd, N1 4HT.

WEST

The Windsor Castle

Find this pub's bijou patio. It gets particularly intimate after dark thanks to an abundance of heaters, soft lighting and secluded nooks for hushed conversations.

What's the actual pub like? So earnestly charming that you'd be forgiven for thinking you'd walked on to the set of a Richard Curtis film.

→ 114 Campden Hill Rd, W8 7AR.

The Swan

The courtyard at this tucked-up tavern is as spacious as it gets and you can tell there's been genuine thought put into its Covid-compliant layout and fengshui heater arrangement.

What's the actual pub like? Proper classy, with a sultry ambience come nightfall. ■ Lucas Oakeley

→ 1 Evershed Walk, 119 Acton Lane, W4 5HH.



The Faltering Fullback

Love Local

Edited by Kate Lloyd
timeout.com/lovelocal

The shops that got you through 2020

In the final hit of our Local Lifesavers series, readers celebrate ace neighbourhood stores

C Central N North S South E East W West

S Taooting Arena

'They were always stocked up with everything we needed during lockdown: fresh veg, tinned beans, craft beers and, most crucially, bread flour.' @shutter_bean
→ 6-8 Upper Tooting Rd, SW17 7PG.

N Parkway Greens

'There's a cosy atmosphere in this Camden shop. You can smell Turkish food being cooked and they have an amazing selection of produce. They even have Cypriot potatoes, and being from Cyprus, that made me feel at home.' @edguk
→ 52 Parkway, NW1 7AH.

S Khan's Bargain

'An A to Z of spices, all in one place.' @deeaishya
→ 135 Rye Lane, SE15 4ST.

N Yasar Halim

'This Green Lanes store had everything that the supermarkets ran out of. Plus packaging-free veg.' @nella_allegra_b
→ 493 Green Lanes, N4 1AL.

N Zaco Convenience Store

'This Upper Street shop is an absolute treasure trove. It has lots of choice, especially when it comes to organic goods.' @tanyabowd
→ 175 Upper St, N1 1RG.

E Akin Supermarkets

'On Shacklewell Lane in Dalston, this shop had absolutely everything during the Great First Lockdown, including flour and yeast! They've always got fresh fruit and veg and a great selection of wine (essentials). They got me through the quarantine.' @sea.walls
→ 2 Shacklewell Lane, E8 2EZ.

N Clocktower Store

'A Crouch End gem with the best lettuces around.' @sybrighton
→ 52 The Broadway, N8 9TP.

N Nature

'These guys have the best produce in town, and always give service with a genuine "how are you?". They even reordered my favourite product more quickly than planned, when



Khan's Peckham

'They kept me afloat on days I couldn't see another friendly face'

it was out of stock. They kept me afloat on days I couldn't see another friendly face.' @saffersnaps
→ 219 Stoke Newington High St, N16 7HU.

E Stone Mini Market

'You always feel super-welcome at this Leytonstone shop and they try and be eco-friendly too.' @tatxventura
→ 743 High Rd Leytonstone, E11 4QS.

C Bağcı Food Centre

'They've got banging international food and fresh veg at this shop on Central Street.' @leadzifa
→ 152 Central St, EC1V 3AL.



Stone Mini Market

to keep us going through our 14-day quarantine! The big stores didn't have a delivery slot for the whole two weeks, but Bally delivered the same day. If he didn't have an item, he found it for us.' *@julie_king_2*
 → 27 Lower Belgrave St, SW1W 0LS.

E Buy & Save

'A Walthamstow heaven for any spice you ever need. They have 20 different types of honey and great olives.' *@rose_prinelle*
 → 253-255 High St, E17 7BH.

E Hussey's

'This Wapping store did a good job of serving the community and offered free home deliveries throughout the year.' *@kirstin5177*
 → 64 Wapping Lane, E1W 2RL.

N Where 2 Save

'The guys at this store were perfect! They never overcharged on products that were difficult to source during the pandemic. In fact, when I spoke to the boss, he mentioned doing that meant he lost out but he wanted to help so it never mattered for him.' *@polat7m*
 → 352 Kilburn High Rd, NW6 2QJ.



N Harringay Local Store

'On Green Lanes in Haringey, this shop kept up with the madness of lockdown brilliantly.' *@alicedeville*
 → 581c Green Lanes, N8 0RG.

W Soloman Best Choice

'At this Maida Vale shop, you can literally get everything you need: fab fresh produce, and Middle Eastern, Indian and Mediterranean herbs and spices. And there was no queue when people were waiting outside Tesco round the block.' *@khushikukadia*
 → 247 Elgin Avenue, W9 1NJ.



Harringay Local Store

S FreshGo

'The owner of this Gypsy Hill shop lost his life to corona because they stayed open throughout lockdown.' *@sophieisabel*
 → 81 Gypsy Hill, SE19 1QL.

S SK Store

'I go to this Old Kent Road shop for all my Indian cooking ingredients.' *@sheelasrasoi*
 → 201-203 Old Kent Rd, SE1 5NB.

W Charles of Belgravia

'Bally [from Charles of Belgravia] delivered fresh fruit and vegetables



Time Out's Love Local campaign supports local food, drink and culture businesses in London. Find out how you can help the places that make our city great.
timeout.com/lovelocalondon

Escapes

Edited by Ellie Walker-Arnott
timeout.com/daytrips

The best UK breaks we went on this year

Big blow-out adventures around the world were cancelled in 2020, but there were alternatives. Here's how *Ellie Walker-Arnott* made use of her annual leave

1 The close-to-home staycation

When you've been stuck inside your own home for four months, it turns out there's no need to head somewhere exotic – just going outside is a total high. This was the year of the staycation, whether that meant rediscovering the city or kipping in a London hotel, relishing every minute under a duvet that wasn't ours. Or full of crumbs from working lunches in our bed office.

Top spot The Coop, a plush cabin with a hot tub overlooking a field of sheep. It's just beyond the M25, yet when we visited it felt like travelling to a different dimension.

→ The Coop, Essex. Sleeps two. From £155 a night. www.colemans-farm.co.uk

2 The off-grid digital detox

We woke up one day and said: Enough. We were done with the doomscrolling, the virtual pub quizzes, the stilted Zoom drinks – and the popularity of off-grid

escapes all over the UK this summer is proof we weren't the only ones.

Top spot Kent's the Beach House is a solar-powered cabin that even requires you to bring your own drinking water, and was booking website Canopy & Stars's fastest-selling place of all time when it went live this summer. It has no signal, no wifi, zero opportunities to 'jump on a call' and plentiful ways to embrace the world IRL, sea swims and all.

→ The Beach House, Isle of Sheppey. Sleeps four. From £150 a night. www.canopyandstars.co.uk

3 The one where you WF (someone else's) H

The beauty of living a huge chunk of our lives online this year meant that, if we were WFH, we didn't have to be tied to the same desk, or even the same city. Thanks to a blend of annual leave and logging on from afar, an extended trip to an Airbnb was the ideal break from our over-familiar four walls.

Top spot Barn conversion The Loft



Linea



Shellbeach

comes with a workspace that's probably nicer than your office. If you can even remember what that looks like, at this point.

→ The Loft, Northamptonshire. Sleeps six. From £99 a night. www.airbnb.co.uk

4 The camping trip we weren't entirely prepared for

Pitched as the ideal post-lockdown holiday, campsites were absolutely winning this summer. It felt like everyone we knew was sleeping under canvas. They made it look so

LINEA: © LINNIE HE HOME STAYS; BERTY'S CAMPSITE: DANA ARVIS; SHELLBEACH: ELLIS ANASTASIADES

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Beryl's Campsite



fun, we went too. And discovered that camping requires a lot more equipment than it appears. We found ourselves in a compost loo sans bog roll, in a sink queue without a washing-up bowl and attempting to live in a field with just a pair of wellies and a two-man tent, but we were not alone.

Top spot Beryl's Campsite is what alfresco dreams are made of. It's rustic, surrounded by greenery and just minutes from the sea.

→ Beryl's Campsite, Devon. From £8.50 a night.
www.berylscampsite.co.uk

We found ourselves in a compost loo sans bog roll

5 The outdoorsy adventure

We'd never actually been hiking before, but so what? We heard the call of the Great Outdoors this year, and we answered, whether or not we had ever read an Ordnance Survey map. There were probably a lot of Londoners attempting to Google-Map their way through dense stretches of woodland, but we got a kick out of being so wholesome.

Top spot The South Downs are London's closest National Park, for a stroll or a week's walking hol. Just don't wear-in new boots walking the entire 100-mile South Downs Way.

6 The let's-pretend-we've-gone-abroad one

Holidays in the UK are always great, but this year they were forced upon a lot of us a little unwillingly. So we tried to replicate our cancelled foreign trips. The most dedicated booked the kind of holiday home that you'd find on genuinely sun-soaked shores. Lucky with the weather? We almost got away with it.

Top spot Clifftop villa Linea has an infinity pool and a swanky alfresco living space. It *could* be Ibiza, but is on the north Devon coast. ■

→ Linea, Devon. Sleeps ten. From £6,250 for a short break. www.uniquehomestays.com

And what we'll book in 2021...



Lesser-travelled spots

Certain places go with summer holidays like buckets go with spades but plenty of us will be swerving them in favour of places like Northumberland, the quietest county in England. It has just 63 people per square kilometer (for context, London has 5,701) as well as dramatic coastlines and a brilliant National Park.

Book this Remote shepherd's hut Cheviot has an alfresco tub and a stargazing window above the bed.
→ www.kiphideaways.com

Nostalgic stays

According to booking site Canopy & Stars, nostalgic breaks will be big in 2021: treehouses that remind us of childhood and cabins comfotingly packed full of boardgames. Old-fashioned places with fairytale vibes will beat anything too sleek.

Book this Keeper's Cottage looks like the kind of place Little Red Riding Hood would call home.
→ www.landmarktrust.org.uk

Glamping pop-ups

When domestic travel took off this summer, campsites sprung up all over the place: in fields, in hotel grounds, even a beach in Cornwall became a temporary campsite.

And that pop-up attitude is set to continue right on into 2021, taking us on trips to unique corners of the country to have experiences shared by only a few others.

Book this Hinterlandes, a bus-camper hybrid, will be moving around the Lakes next summer. *EW-A*
→ www.canopyandstars.co.uk

Time In

Edited by Phil de Semlyen
timeout.com/timein



The 10 best films of 2020

Time Out Film editor *Phil de Semlyen* picks the movies that lit up the toughest year in cinema history



'1917'



IT STARTED WITH a biting South Korean social satire-cum-thriller winning Best Picture and ended with everyone wondering if there'd even *be* a Best Picture. 2020 was a movie year like no other (and let's not forget that the medium more than survived two actual world wars). But despite the temporary closure of cinemas, a mass switch to streaming and wild uncertainty over what comes next, there's been plenty of mesmerising films to enjoy, and reasons for future optimism.

1 Parasite
One of the most joyous aspects of 2020 is the success of Bong Joon-ho and 'Parasite', a film we can safely and unhyperbolically call a

masterpiece. The Korean filmmaker was hardly an unknown quantity – he's been turning out gems since his debut, 'Barking Dogs Never Bite', 20 years ago – but this year even the Academy joined his dedicated fanbase, the Bong-hive. In a tough year for London's indie cinemas, his Oscar-winner provided much box-office succour too.



'Lovers Rock'

2 Rocks
This east London triumph follows Olushola 'Rocks' Omotoso (Bucky Bakray) when Mum walks out and she's forced to keep things together in Hackney. Its backstory is worth celebrating too: a female-led crew and actors cast from local schools and sharing their lived experiences on screen showing that there are new, more inclusive ways to make movies.

3 Saint Maud
You can feel the damp fleck of sea air and surges of religious mania in Rose Glass's spellbinding debut. 'Saint Maud' offers a creepy juxtaposition of British mundanity and spiritual horrors that 'The Exorcist' would be proud of. Major props to Morfydd Clark for her turn as a nurse with shades of Joan of Arc. Also, for surviving the shoot.

4 Portrait of a Lady on Fire
It's set in the eighteenth century and feels a bit like it came out then too (it was February, honest). But Céline Sciamma's quiet storm of emotion and repressed

sexuality remains etched in the memory. If you came out eager to take up painting, congratulations. That was lockdown sorted.

5 A Hidden Life
After three duds, 'A Hidden Life' is a serious return to form for Terrence Malick. The true story of an Austrian conscientious objector standing up to the Nazis, it's one of the most resonant and moving films of recent years.

6 Uncut Gems
'This is how I win.' Except Howard Ratner, 'Uncut Gems' diamond-dealer antihero, is too

The 21 films to see in 2021
[timeout.com/film](https://www.timeout.com/film)



addicted to the high to do anything other than lose in this blood-pressure-ramping thriller. Thanks to Adam Sandler's jittery energy, there's only one way to watch this film: with a cardiologist present.

7 Lovers Rock

The high point of Steve McQueen's five-film celebration of Black London life, 'Small Axe', this hour of house-party heaven brims with sexual static, killer reggae and soul cuts, and the kind of hazy hanging-out that makes you curse lockdown afresh.

8 1917

Proof that Sam Mendes didn't leave any of his action mojo on the set of 'Spectre', this pulsing race-against-time Great War thriller gives a Tommy's-eye view of combat. Conclusion? Nervy fun to watch; zero fun to be there.

9 The Lighthouse

Back in the 'Twilight' days, you probably wouldn't have put money on Robert Pattinson having sex with a mermaid and beating a seagull to death on screen. Which is why we love the man: he dedicates himself to sniffing out the weird, wonderful and surprising. This briny wig-out is all three.

10 Les Misérables

Maverick cops, pissed-off teenagers and a rogue lion make an incendiary mix in this blistering banlieue thriller. The spiritual heir to 1995's 'La Haine' (which also got a re-release this year), absolutely no one was singing in this 'Les Mis'. ■



'Parasite'



Soul



WHAT IS IT...

Pixar's jazz-fuelled journey into the great beyond.

WHY GO...

For a spirit-soaring celebration of Black music and culture.

→ Directors Pete Docter, Kemp Powers (PG) 97 mins. On Disney+ Dec 25.

IS AN UNFULFILLED life worth living? What awaits us after death? The questions posed by Pixar's latest aren't your average starting point for an animation. The story follows Joe (Jamie Foxx), a music teacher who dreams of becoming a jazz pianist, until an accident untethers his soul from his body. The opportunity of a lifetime will pass him by unless he can convince a grumpy lost soul (Tina Fey) that life is worth living.

Even as the race-against-time device begins to feel laboured, the world of the movie sparkles. The title is a clever double entendre for the ascension to the spiritual realm and the warmth associated with Black culture. Playwright Kemp Powers co-directs and co-writes (with Pete Docter) and his influence is keenly felt: from the glisten of black skin, to the texture of an afro and the authenticity of the conversations in a barbershop. None of it is forced, testament to the involvement of people with real lived experience.

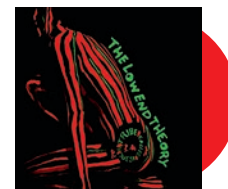
If anything, 'Soul' is guilty of over-ambition. The wizardry and wit is there, but it lacks Pixar's usual deftness in making complex themes sing for youngsters. Mixing heart and existential angst, it'll connect more with Joe's generation than little ones. It's smart and, yes, soulful but it never quite takes flight. ■ *Whelan Barzey*

LISTEN WHILE YOU WATCH

Co-director *Kemp Powers* on three jazzy LPs that inspired 'Soul'



'Thelonious Monk Quartet with John Coltrane at Carnegie Hall'
 'Monk and Coltrane are two of my jazz trinity - the other is Charles Mingus. I could listen to them for ever.'



'The Low End Theory'
 A Tribe Called Quest
 'I told Pixar that Gen X hip hop heads leaned into sampling jazz. I like to think Joe might have been in school with Q-Tip.'



'The Charles Mingus Quintet & Max Roach'
 'My favourite Mingus song, "Haitian Fight Song", is [the hero] Joe's ringtone in "Soul". I have the bassline tattooed on my arm.'

MY STREAMING SALVATION

Nairn Across Britain

Deputy editor *Chris Waywell* on his small-screen happy place



A PORTLY MAN emerges from a London townhouse, accompanied by some lite jazz. He's wearing what used to be called a 'car coat' and carries a briefcase. He unlocks a dented Morris Minor and wobbles off up the road. This is the start of Ian Nairn's journey north. Here's two reasons you might think 'Nairn Across Britain' isn't for you: a) it's about architecture, and b) it's from 1972. But trust me, this series is relentlessly brilliant and strange.

Nairn, a camera-shy architectural critic, makes an unlikely TV frontman. As he wends his way to Scotland, he considers a country caught between a debated past and an obscure future. He defends some monstrous buildings, decries destructive town planners and scorns the twee. There's a magical passage about gliders on the downs near Dunstable, an impassioned defence of an



'No Sheila, I'm not walking another step until I've had a pint'

about-to-be-demolished shopping arcade in Northampton and much eloquence about canals. He is often hilarious: there's a description of a glum Leicestershire village as having 'laid down and died'. There's a curious eighteenth-century quality to it all, like Daniel Defoe's 'A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain' rewritten by an oddball vicar or an over-imaginative Labour backbencher.

So, why should you watch it? Well, firstly because Nairn is the kind of eccentric, vividly insightful man you rarely see on TV now. He's got zero pose, and is totally unafraid to be critical. Just as importantly, though, he examines what Britain is through what it looks like. When he uses the term 'community' it means something. Today, when our national identity is constantly mediated and marketed back to us, his ability to see beyond the emptily nostalgic feels almost seditious. ■

→ Available on BBC iPlayer

Four perfect podcasts for theatre lovers

Culture editor *Andrzej Łukowski* picks backstage chats to fill the gap

1 Playwright's Podcast

Genial playwright Simon Stephens hosts this thespiest of thespy podcasts. Produced by the Royal Court, Playwright's Podcast eschews celebrity performer names in favour of – as the title suggests – playwrights. Stephens makes an unobtrusive interviewer, who teases an hour or so of fascinating reminiscences from the likes of David Hare, Lucy Prebble and Roy Williams. In an age when virtually no dramatists have much of a public profile, it's a rare and fascinating forum.

→ www.royalcourttheatre.com

2 What I Love

Theatre director Ian Rickson is one of the greats: he ran the Royal Court in the late '90s and '00s, and has directed everything from Jez Butterworth's peerless 'Jerusalem' to PJ Harvey tours. This isn't strictly speaking a theatre podcast, but his day job permeates these intimate chats with guests like Kae Tempest, Chiwetel Ejiofor and Ben Whishaw. They share their favourite film, piece of writing and song.

→ play.acast.com/s/what-i-love



3 That Black Theatre Podcast

The National Theatre has launched many interesting podcasts over the years, but its current series is one of the best, as host Nadine Deller takes us on a journey through the rich history of Black British theatre. It's a chronological affair that begins in the '30s with an examination of Jamaican-born Una Marson, and then studiously onwards. As of December 2020, it's just about to arrive at the present day.

→ www.nationaltheatre.org.uk

4 The Hamilcast

There are plenty of US podcasts devoted to chummy yet baffling interviews with Broadway performers. The Hamilcast is not one of them. Nearly 250 episodes solely devoted to the musical 'Hamilton' may sound like an oddball undertaking, but host Gillian Pensavalle is a delight as she breezes into wildly enthusiastic chit-chat with various show veterans – it's an insight not just into 'Hamilton', but the whole business of being a musical theatre performer. ■

→ www.thehamilcast.com



Cuphead

Six great new games for nostalgic gamers

Gateway heaven for lapsed button-mashers



If you miss playing Contra

A blast through a series of inventive bosses, **Cuphead** offers hard-as-nails difficulty reminiscent of old-school run-and-gun platformers. Inspired by surreal 1930s cartoons and with a big-band jazz soundtrack, it'll sure scratch that itch for nostalgia. → PS4, Xbox One, Nintendo Switch, PC.



If you miss playing Mega Man

A love letter to 8-bit games, **Shovel Knight: Treasure Trove** has all the style and challenge of your favourite classic platformers. The Showdown battle mode even lets you challenge your pals to a duel – just like the good old days. → PS4, Xbox One, Nintendo Switch, PC.



If you miss playing Doom

If you used to play the Doom games you'll know what **Doom Eternal** is all about: having a whole lot of fun clonking terrifying monsters with massive, over-the-top weapons. If you fancy slicing a demon in half, here's where to go. → PS4, Xbox One, Nintendo Switch, PC.



If you miss playing Tony Hawk's Pro Skater

A remake of the first two Tony Hawk games, **Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 1 + 2** is a reminder of why a generation of non-skaters know what a 'switch foot pogo' is. Even the infectious skatepunk soundtrack is still there. → PS4, Xbox One, PC.



If you miss playing Rollercoaster Tycoon

A throwback park simulator, **Planet Coaster: Console Edition** lets you build your very own Disneyland. The creative freedom is a joy, as players can precisely place each piece of rollercoaster track to make a truly unique park. → PS4, PS5, Xbox One, Xbox Series X.



If you miss playing Streets of Rage

The legendary arcade series is back with **Streets of Rage 4**. The four-player mode is a retro romp with none of the tangled wires of yesteryear's gaming. Fighting endless waves of bad guys has never felt so satisfying. ■ *Django Zimmatore* → PS4, Xbox One, Nintendo Switch, PC.

Modern gaming: a lapsed gamer's guide

Culture editor
Andrzej Lukowski
dusts off his thumbs

Back in 2008, I accidentally left my PlayStation 2 behind moving from Bristol to seek my fortune in the capital. I haven't gamed since. Life always got in the way. For some reason, I've had time on my hands this year, and with my eldest child about ready to game (he watches a lot of weird Minecraft videos), I decided to bloody well get myself an Xbox Series X, Microsoft's superpowered new console.

If you've been out of the loop for the last decade, it's genuinely mindblowing that Xboxes now work mostly via the internet. The visual leap is staggering. There are also a lot more menus.

That said, having dabbled with three games – Polish classic *The Witcher 3*, the ravishing latest 'Star Wars' jobbie *Fallen Order* and fun new gangster epic *Yakuza: Like a Dragon* – it's clear that good games are still good games, just prettier and bigger and menu-ier.

As our forefathers moved from Pong to Super Mario Bros, so I have adjusted from Tekken 2 to the games of 2020. The most groundbreaking thing is that the Series X is designed to look unobtrusive and has been sitting in plain sight of my children for weeks now, unnoticed. Maybe I will tell them at Christmas, if they are good. ■

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The Green Room

What is it? The recipe for a super Saturday, that's what. You'll get unlimited booze and some delicious dishes for under £30.

Why go? For the genuine value. Free-flowing drink is the main draw of every bottomless brunch in town. But how long do they normally last? An hour? 90 minutes if you're lucky? Well, this one's two hours long.

Wait, how much? Just £28.

→ 101 Upper Ground. www.timeout.com/thegreenroom



'GHBoy'

What is it? A psychological drama set on the east London party scene.

Why go? To enjoy the power of theatre again, of course. This gripping play tackles common misconceptions around gay culture head on, artfully navigating death, substance abuse and infidelity as part of a thrilling story.

Wait, how much? Tickets are only £23.50 per person.

→ Charing Cross Theatre. Until Dec 20. www.timeout.com/ghboycharingcross

Kanishka

What is it? Six sharing dishes in an opulent Indian restaurant.

Why go? So you can experience the culinary creations of a Michelin-starred chef in swish Mayfair surroundings. Atul Kochhar has created an exceptional-sounding menu that you won't want to miss.

Wait, how much? £25 per person for the meal. And you can add a cocktail for an extra fiver.

→ 17-19 Maddox St www.timeout.com/kanishkamayfair

Moriarty's Game: A Killer in the Hive

What is it? An immersive virtual crime drama that you can play with your pals, wherever they are.

Why buy? To prove to your mates that you're a better detective than they are. You'll complete a variety of sleuthing tasks in 90 minutes of Sherlock Holmes-style action.

Wait, how much? Tickets are £11 per device, but we've bagged you three for two on top of that.

→ www.timeout.com/moriartysgame

Inamo

What is it? Unlimited sushi and a beer, glass of wine or sake. Let's be honest, we've featured this offer so many times you probably know the menu off by heart. But you lot love it, so here we go again, folks.

Why go? Because it's still unreal value, the food is still delicious and there's still as much of it as you like.

Wait, how much? Oh yes, you guessed it: it's still just £22 – enjoy!

→ 134-136 Wardour St and 11-14 Hanover Place. www.timeout.com/inamogain

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