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LONDON

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Inside

This week's Time Out
in no time at all

Read or dead

From Marxist theory to zombie warfare, do World Book Day your way with a spot of extreme reading

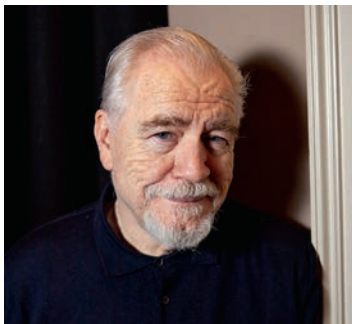
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'Nobody had ever called me darling before'

Brian Cox on his start in theatre

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'Kimono: Kyoto to Catwalk'

The V&A is wild about Japan's iconic garment. *Sugoi!*

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Elf preservation

Two teen elves use a spell to reanimate their dead dad – and it half works. Pixar's new film 'Onward' is a tale of the unexpected

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Party in King's Cross

N1C is getting a cool new music venue. We take a first look at Lafayette, the latest venture from Omeara boss Ben Lovett

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Hello, London

Joe Mackertich
London Editor
@j_mackertich



Living in London, it's easy to accumulate *stuff*. Old gig flyers, mini sriracha bottles, your ironically large pile of KeepCups, reams and reams and reams of photo-booth prints from weddings. We could all do with a bit of a clear-out.

There is one thing most of us still lack, however: neighbours. How many of us know the people on our streets? For years, as a resident of Holloway, I'd see an elderly man, sat on his front step, pulling on a high-tar Rothmans. I passed him daily for seven years but never said hello. He was like a bollard or a shop, part of the urban foliage that gives a city its texture. Then, one day, I introduced myself. His name was Charlie.

Every day after that I'd sit and chat with him, sometimes for ten minutes, often for an hour. His life had been an extraordinarily London blend of mischief, tragedy and high adventure. Then, one day as I walked home from work, I saw that he was gone.

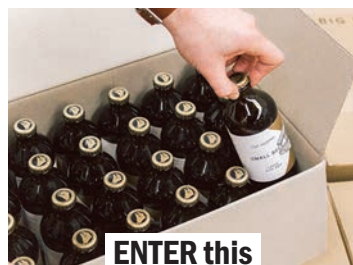
Chances are, you have your own Charlie, sat nearby, waiting for someone to say hello. Do yourself a favour and introduce yourself. He won't be around for ever.

THE EDITOR'S ESSENTIALS Three things you have to do this week



EAT this

I finally got round to trying deep-dish pizza at **Japes** in Soho. I'm a food gimmick cynic but even I had to admit deeper's a keeper.



ENTER this

Small Beer Brew Co wants you to go to its website and name people who have done good deeds. Winners will get free (eco-friendly) beer.



READ this

Time Out's Katie McCabe has a book out! The engaging '**More Than a Muse**' is about overlooked women in high-profile creative partnerships.



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City life

Edited by Isabelle Aron
@timeoutlondon



How London helped me embrace who I am

Britain's first out Muslim drag queen *Asifa Lahore* explains how our city helped shaped her. Illustration *Geo Law*

LONDON IS ONE of those rare cities that allows me to express all my identities. I'm British, I'm Asian Pakistani, I'm Muslim, I'm part of the LGBTQ+ community and I'm disabled – I'm severely sight impaired. Living here means I can go to Friday prayers at the mosque, see a drag show in Soho or go for a curry in Southall.

The city provides opportunities for me to intertwine my identities, too. One of my first experiences of this was at Club Kali in Camden, a London LGBTQ+ Bollywood hotspot. The first time I went there was around 2005 – I was at Queen Mary University and struggling with who I was. It was around the same time that I came out to my family. Until that point I felt like the only gay in the Asian village. At Club Kali, I saw

other gaysians and I realised I wasn't alone. It was overwhelming seeing so many brown LGBTQ+ people in the same space, dancing to music that I've grown up with. London's LGBTQ+ scene allows niche groups, like the LGBTQ+ South Asian community, to thrive.

For the last couple of years I've hosted the main stage at Pride in Trafalgar Square. That experience made me realise how much of a world city London is – seeing thousands of people of all races, creeds and different sexualities is heartwarming. I'm known as Britain's first out Muslim drag queen and at Pride I've presented Sadiq Khan, London's first Muslim mayor – words can't describe the pride I feel in getting to introduce him at such a major London event.

Coming out as a Muslim drag queen was difficult. For me it was down to accepting each and every part of my identity and not feeling like I had to give one up for another.

I got into drag by entering Drag Idol in 2012 at Two Brewers in Clapham. I thought about what would set me apart and I went on stage in a rainbow burka which I ripped off to reveal a sari and under that was a mini skirt. I created a drag character that embodied all my identities.

If you're grappling with these issues, you're not alone. Don't be afraid to reach out. There are so many communities in London willing to accept you with open arms. ■

→ Asifa Lahore is a speaker at WOW – Women of the World festival. Southbank Centre. ☉ Waterloo. Fri Mar 6-Sun Mar 8.

MY LONDON STORY

'We deal with our problems while we run'



The Ugandan refugee who found a community through sport

JOSEPHINE OCAKA CAME to London aged 15, fleeing war in her homeland of Uganda. Now, she lives in Camberwell, where she's a regular at her local Parkrun. She got into running by accident. In 2015, she convinced her colleagues to sign up for a local Parkrun, thinking it would be a one-off team-building exercise. Nearly five years on, she rarely misses a session. The five-kilometre event, which takes place every Saturday in more than 22 countries, has introduced her to a new community.

I fled the war in Uganda and came to London in 1989. I lost a lot of my family and people I was at school with. A lot of us fled because it was the only way to survive.

My auntie was already here and I came with my brother and two sisters. That made it easier to integrate. We lived in Blackheath, which was very diverse. We were near Greenwich Park, so there was loads of space to play and do sports.

At the time, all I knew about London was what I'd seen on TV. I only saw glamorous stuff: nice cars, everyone looking stylish. When I arrived in the UK, I was shocked. There were so many different accents! I couldn't understand cockney at all – I thought it was a totally different language.

Before Parkrun, I did not run for anything. I didn't see the point – I didn't even run for the bus. But because I'd signed up so many people I worked with, I couldn't let the other members of my team down. So I had to do it.

Running helps me think. I enjoy the freedom of it. I make the best decisions while I'm running because it's quiet and I have my own way of dealing with things in my head. By the time I've finished, I've figured out what to do next.

I feel a sense of belonging with the Parkrun community. I've met a lot of people who've become my friends and a great support system. They also

challenge me. There are days where I don't want to run and they will be encouraging. You feel like you don't want to let anyone down.

The majority of people at the Parkrun I go to are women. The knowledge and wisdom that they've passed on to me is amazing. We talk about so much during the run: you're really multitasking. We run, we have a chat, we deal with our problems. It's an amazing thing.

Everyone should give running a go. Don't be shy. Believe it or not, we've all been there. Sometimes we can be our own worst enemy, so it's important to try and open up. There's so much support at Parkrun. ■ *Interview by Dominique Sisley*
→ Parkrun is teaming up with This Girl Can to host an International Women's Day run. Sat Mar 7. Various locations.

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

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READY-MADE SUNDAY

Ben Bailey Smith

The Willesden-born actor (aka Doc Brown) on his favourite west London spots for a relaxing end to the week



- 10am ● Café**
I live in Kensal Rise so my Sundays mostly involve loafing around west London. I'd start at **Cable Co** for a cup of tea and a toastie to take away.
- 11am ● Stroll**
Then I'd head to the corner of Harrow Road and Ladbroke Grove, nip down to the canal and walk towards Paddington. Once I hit Little Venice, I rest my feet at **Rembrandt Gardens**, a beautiful and underappreciated canalside park.
- 1pm ● Shop**
From there I'd walk up towards Westbourne Grove and Notting Hill, stopping at **Retro Man** to see if

there are any secondhand designer bargains – there usually are.

- 3pm ● Pub**
Then it's a short walk to **The Uxbridge Arms** for a pint. It's cosy, friendly and has a good selection of games for wasting some Sunday hours.

- 6pm ● Restaurant**
After that I'd go to **Clarendon Cross** on Portland Road, one of the most stylish little quadrants in the city. I'd wander around and pretend I live there until I got hungry, then satisfy my appetite at **Julie's** with some proper posh grub. ■
→ Ben Bailey Smith is in 'The Split' on BBC One and BBC iPlayer.

WORD ON THE STREET

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

'Henry, watch out for other people. They might not want a pterodactyl in their face.'

'I am so attracted to your floor.'

'Paris is just the same street over and over again.'

'Are you telling me you have a black Armani bag full of your exes' dildos?'

'When a burger is taller than it is wide, you know it's going to be problematic.'

'I'm having an issue with that coconut.'

'Your stains are going to be the death of me.'

'I've got hands like a cow's udders.'

'I wouldn't want anyone related to her to go anywhere near my spine.'

'I'm really worried about my dad's circumcision.'

MADE IN LONDON

Is the city's pollution messing with your skin? Almost definitely. Enter east London-based **Neighbourhood Botanicals**, which creates natural skincare with cool packaging. Try The Daily Glow facial oil or Face Off cleanser to help you combat the smog.

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Overheard something weird? Tweet us #wordonthestreet @timeoutlondon



Watch your speed. **The limit's changed.**

If you hit someone at 30mph, they're 5 times more likely to die than if you hit them at 20mph. That's why as of 2 March 2020, we've reduced the speed limit across TfL roads in central London.

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Spring- clean your life

PHOTOGRAPH: ANDY PARSONS; MODEL: ARBY KEHEL; HAIR: SORO PERSONAL TRAINER;
MAKEUP: FRANCESCA TORRANI AT CAROL DAVIES MANAGEMENT



Ah, life in London: every day spent cramming in as much fun/work/stuff as possible. Time to reverse that. You'll feel much better, promise

The big spring-cleaning myth

When *Rose Johnstone* moved to London, she learned the joy of having less

If there's one thing that's not great about liberating yourself from all possessions, it's that anyone you bring home suspects you're a psychopath. It's unsettling to enter a bedroom devoid of decorative items. I get it. But for a month, that was my life: just me, two suitcases' worth of clothes and a duvet I hadn't found a cover for yet. Don't feel bad for me, though – I'd chosen it. Two years ago, I moved to London from Melbourne. As the big departure approached, my fears grew. Would my parents agree to safeguard the Ancient Egypt books I hoarded as a pre-teen? Could I ship that midcentury armchair? I gazed at my *monstera deliciosa* and googled 'bringing plants on planes'. That was until I decided to let it all go. I was upending my life anyway, so why not go the full Marie Kondo?

The great purge began with a garage sale. Watching other

twentysomethings rummaging through my tat (three CDs by The Killers, really?) was painful. But soon it felt thrilling. The more I expunged, the lighter I felt. I kept going until my stuff fitted into two suitcases, which I lugged on to the Piccadilly line from Heathrow to my prison cell of a room in Hackney.

And so I learned the big spring-cleaning myth: that you'll miss your stuff. You won't. I promise you. You'll hardly ever think about it again. You'll take joy from finding new homes for it, in charity shops or with friends. And when you buy more stuff, you'll do it more mindfully. You'll choose things that speak to who you are now, not who you were. And you'll get to discover new corners of your city while doing it. I got up early to find houseplants at Columbia Road. I foraged for new clothes in Brick Lane's markets. I found a fun print for my wall at Of Cabbages & Kings in Stoke Newington. And I treated myself to some super-soft John Lewis towels.

These days, I'd describe my bedroom as less serial killer, more artfully uncluttered... but hey, better eerily tidy than a bloody mess. ➔



Polish up your outlook



Find joy in walking around the city

Become a weekday wanderer, says *Chris Waywell*, and it'll perk up your commute

It's great to explore London, but sometimes exploration can be forced upon you. I used to catch a train to Charing Cross, then walk ten minutes to work. One day they closed that line, so I had to go to Cannon Street. It felt miles away, stuck in the City. I started getting the tube and hated it. So I tried walking again. This time, though, I didn't look for the most direct route, along the smoggy arterial roads that feed into the West End. I went a different way every day. I refined it. I created a masterpiece of pedestrianism. I'd walk down to the river and follow the Thames Path past Blackfriars Bridge. I'd cut up through Lower Temple (when I was a kid, my dad let me into the secret that the public is allowed to walk through it), past all the shiny lawyer-cars with their stupid number plates – BR13F. At the top,

a beautiful glass arcade spits you out on to Fleet Street, opposite the Royal Courts of Justice. I'd sneak round the back of the courts, picturing the defendants counting the seconds till their case was called. Down a Dickensian alley lined with legal bookshops and you come out into New Square, which was new in about 1500. The grass there looks like someone trims it with nail scissors. There's a gate at the top with a sentry box that lets you out into Lincoln's Inn Fields. I'd walk round the right side of the square where at night there's a soup kitchen, then past Sir John Soane's house, across Kingsway to Shaftesbury Avenue. It took 40 minutes, but it was mine: by the time I got to work, I felt like I'd achieved something. Okay, I was often late but I was much happier. Then the office moved to King's Cross. I can get a direct train there from home. Most days, though, I don't. I still walk up from Cannon Street, past St Paul's, across Holborn Viaduct, up Leather Lane and through the canyons of Clerkenwell, or among the tombs and dope smokers of St George's Gardens. One day, I'll have to change this route too. Or maybe I'll die. In which case I want my ashes scattered by night in New Square, making the fancy barristers' lawns lusher than ever.

UPGRADE YOUR WINDOWSILL

Want to literally change your perspective on life? Frame your view (or block out the bins) with fresh greenery and ceramics from London makers. Then light a homemade Mama Moon candle, which, if you believe in magic, will clear out any neg vibes. (It smells pretty good, too.)

- 1 Calathea Ornata, £20. www.edierose.co.uk
- 2 Tradescantia houseplant, £4.50. www.botaniqueworkshop.com
- 3 Medium concrete pot, £12. www.etsy.com/shop/sugarandcement
- 4 Sage incense, £16. www.earlofeast.com
- 5 Incense holder, £45. www.laurabird.co.uk
- 6 Plant basket, £15. www.botaniqueworkshop.com
- 7 Scalloped cement coaster, £5. www.etsy.com/shop/sugarandcement
- 8 Spiritual Bleach candle, £30. www.mamamooncandles.com
- 9 Dinky stoneware pot, £22. www.jodepankhurst.co.uk
- 10 Lady Vase, £35. www.elizabethmacneal.com
- 11 Flowers in vase, various prices. www.edierose.co.uk



WINDOWSILL: CURATED BY ELLIE WALKER-NOTT; PHOTOGRAPH: ANDY PARSONS; ILLUSTRATION: LAURENE BOGLIO. THANKS TO PROFILE PENSIONS FOR THE WINDOWSILL

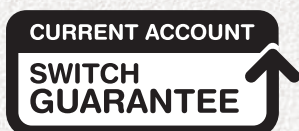
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Get big exec energy

Life-sorting advice from four London big shots



Ella May McDermott
Stage manager of 'Les Misérables'

'If you saw "Les Misérables", you'd think we had backstage spaces the size of football pitches, but it's actually cramped. Huge pieces of scenery, rifles, flagpoles... it's all got to stay organised or someone gets hurt. Everything has its labelled spot, and it goes straight back there after use.'



Jan Konetzki Wine director

'I work across four restaurants and it took me a while to learn the skills of time management. Mapping out how I was spending my time was a real breakthrough. Now I try never to open an email twice – I reply right away! And each morning I plan my day on paper. Even if I only get 75 percent of it done, crossing things off feels really good.'



Will Spoelstra Supervisor of the Palm House at Kew Gardens

'It's good to stay flexible: if you map something out to perfection and it goes wrong, you can fall to bits. And trust your team, it takes the pressure off you. I've learned that, just like I need to water and prune each plant differently, it's the same for people you work with. Treat them differently to get the best out of them.'



Arike Oke Managing director of Black Cultural Archives

'The challenge with my job is that there are different layers: as well as being an archive, we act as a safe space for the community, and we host free legal surgeries for people affected by the hostile environment. For me, the key is working collaboratively. If I tried to do it all myself, I'd probably fall over!'

LEARN

HOW TO SAY

'NO' TO...

Sometimes people want you to join them doing stuff that's objectively not great. Don't get dragged down

A festival, headlined by The Hoosiers, called J20 Presents Peterborough Rocks!

'What weekend did you say it was on? Oh damn. I'm signed up to take some lovely old dears from my nana's crocheting circle over to the Fragile Hope Orphanage for a puppy and bunny parade. I'll just call them now and cancel... No? Aww. You sure?'

A hen on a 'party pirate ship' in Magaluf

'Er, awkward: I'm unfortunately banned from the Balearic Islands on account of a 2016 incident in the VIP section of Space, involving me, two "Loose Women" presenters and some very regrettable giddiness. An ITV-enforced gag order precludes me from divulging any details.'

An interactive performance-art event held in a working Peckham abattoir

'Oh noooo, didn't get your email. Weird! They do get "stuck" sometimes, don't they, emails? Jammed in the web mainframe servers. Saw a thing in G2 about it.'

Your new neighbour's housewarming party

'OMG I'd love to but I've got 18 stitches in my groin right now – long story – and the doc specifically warned against gyrating in a stranger's crowded kitchen because the stitches could pop right open and then blurrp, ka-splooosh! A real dog's dinner. So...'

INTERVIEWS: ALICE SWILLE; LEARN HOW TO SAY NO: JOE MADDEN; PORTRAITS: ANDY PARSONS



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Declutter the right way



Know what's worth selling

Secondhand scenesters reveal where to hawk your wares

The eBayer

'People go bananas for United Colors of Benetton jumpers. Things I can remember from being a teenager sell really well, like "J'adore Dior" tops – they're going for more now than they did at the time.' *Robyn Donaldson aka @almost_everything_off_ebay on Instagram*

The Depopper

'Sports brands like Champion sell well on Depop. Nike is always good too. If it's vintage sportswear, you have a much higher chance of selling it. One

of the quickest items we sold was a Nike handbag with a Nike trainer printed on it. It sold in an hour.' *Cole Holder, co-founder of @velvetxcole Depop account*

The car booter

'You can end up selling weird stuff. I picked up some china dogs and swans at a car boot, which I use as plant pots. Battersea is a really popular car boot. Go there if you want to make some decent money. Chiswick is the big one for selling cool furniture and interiors. Peckham car boot is the place to sell

nice vintage clothing, books and CDs. People often ask for rare books.' *Erin Murphy, founder of Peckham Car Boot*

The antiques dealer

'There's a real market for vintage posters. They can range from travel posters – like iconic 1930s, '40s and '50s railway posters – to movie posters. We had a sale of "Star Wars" memorabilia just before Christmas and it went crazy. Look for pop culture items that have become rare.' *David Macdonald, head of house sales at Sotheby's*

ACTUALLY FIX YOUR BROKEN STUFF



It's time to face the cold, harsh light of day: you are an adult now, and you need to know how to do things. Things involving big hammers. 'I just got this Tate exhibition poster framed; how do I get it on to my bedroom wall?!' you cry. Well, you can learn to use a Black+Decker with a DIY in a Day – Drills class at **The Good Life Centre** in Borough. If you're feeling ambitious, it does tiling and plumbing courses, too. In fact, London has a whole cohort of 'people who can do things' who have made it their mission to nurture the city's adult-babies to a place of DIY competence. Groups like **Hackney Fixers** and **Reimagine Co** run free sessions where volunteers will help you bring your broken microwave, toaster or hairdryer back to life. And if you don't want to commit to an extortionately priced set of tools (or the trip to B&Q), you can rent drills, ladders, screwdrivers and sewing machines on a day-rate basis at the **Library of Things** in Crystal Palace and Upper Norwood.

You only need one condiment

Owner of Max's Sandwich Shop, **Max Halley**, says *this* makes everything delicious

My favourite kimchi and, I believe, the best made in Britain is Kim Kong Kimchi. It's produced by my friend James, in Harringay, very close to the Sarnie Shop – where we use about half a ton of it a year. I love it blended up in mayonnaise, with a sausage at breakfast, on barbecued vegetables, with steak and chips or, of course, on its own.





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Model shown GT Line R135 238 miles. Play R110 up to 245 miles. WLTP figures for comparability purposes. Figures obtained after the battery was fully charged. Actual real-world driving results may vary depending on factors such as accessories fitted after registration. For details visit renault.co.uk/zoe. 5 year warranty on cars ordered from 18 December 2019 – 5 years or 100,000 miles (whichever comes first). Exclusions apply visit renault.co.uk/warranty.



Travel light, like this comedian

Lou Sanders is on tour right now – and she's barely taken anything with her

I pack light. The only thing that really weighs me down is my merch. I've got 300 'Vote Labia' tote bags in my car. I once broke down and the mechanics were like 'what the fuck are these?'.

You can't tell how experienced a comedian is by how light they travel. An established comic who I love, Lucy Pearman, wheeled up to the Edinburgh Fringe with two huge suitcases and a bike. One contained *just* props.

I've washed stuff in hotel sinks. I did a show in King's Lynn. Before, I went for a walk and was like, 'what a beautiful riverbank, why aren't people getting closer to it?'. I slid down it and got mud all over my dress. I had to wash and dry it with ten minutes to go. I told the story on stage but I don't think the audience believed me.

It's really liberating not to carry a bag. When you've got no bag, you feel so free! Men come into work without one, it's like, where's your shit?

Getting rid of emotional baggage is good too. I used to meditate every day, really religiously. I need to get back into it. I have a spiritual healer and she tells me to have faith and give it all up to the light. A lot of people don't believe in fate but, I tell you what, it really takes the pressure off.

I write problems down on paper and then burn them. I suppose you could do that with physical possessions, too. You can burn anything you like, really. It works for everything, that's my heartfelt message to you.
→ Lou Sanders brings 'Say Hello to Your New Step-Mummy' to Leicester Square Theatre on Jun 13.



INTERVIEW: SAMANTHA WILLS; PORTRAIT: ANDY PARSONS; HAIR AND MAKE-UP: FRANCESCA INGRAM AT CAROL HAYES MANAGEMENT



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Simplify everything



Just wear one very good outfit

Waking up to the conundrum of what to wear to work, to brunch or to the corner shop places undue stress on what could be a (relatively) pain-free morning. So here's a revelation: one steez fits all. This white long-sleeved T-shirt (www.thewhitecompany.com), artist's jacket (www.folkclothing.com) and jeans (www.blackhorselane.com) combo is genderless, timeless and manufactured by eco-conscious London brands. Add trainers (www.stepneyworkersclub.com) and a backpack made from recycled materials (www.raeburndesign.co.uk) and you're ready for anything. Except snow.

GET YOUR LIFE ADMIN DONE

Energy coach *India Majury* has some tips on how to become a productive person

I used to have the worst temper and couldn't express myself. I had a high-stress job in fashion as a pattern-cutter and would kick off if my Oyster card wouldn't work. My body started showing signs that things weren't right. I suffered with IBS, anxiety and depression, and turned to drink and drugs. It took a while, but eventually I learned to take things one step at a time, which helped me relax and move forward. Now, my job is to help others do the same. For a lot of people, life admin can be the straw that breaks the camel's back. Tax returns, for example, can make you think you didn't earn enough money last year or that you're not good enough. Write down those fears – that way you can dissect them and understand them. Recognising and accepting what you're afraid of is like blowing up a balloon and letting it go. That will free up space in your mind and body to deal with small tasks. I always recommend creating a comfortable space at home. It's about having a place where you feel calm. Decorate it with things that'll pick up your mood. It should stop you from procrastinating.



One exercise fits all

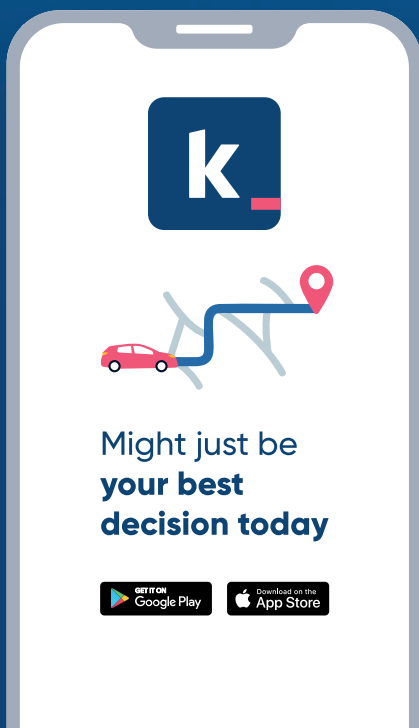
👉 Bear crawls – crawling on your hands and feet while keeping your back flat and your weight stacked over your shoulders – are good for your whole body. They work your core, your upper body strength, your balance and your mobility. 🏆

Arby Keheli, personal trainer at F45





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Tidy up your free time



Ditch your bad mates

Got a pal who keeps letting you down? *Oliver Keens* says maybe it's time to lose them

As a student, I first registered that quality trumps quantity after I got scurvy from only shopping at Poundland. But it wasn't until I was 27 that I realised a friendship should be like a nutritious Waitrose salad not a multipack of Frazzles.

Being super young and super sociable in London means it's possible to accumulate friends as quickly as you can say 'sesh gremlin'. But my God, you pick up some wrong 'uns along the way.

Now, I'm not a great exalted member of society, like a rabbi or Anthea Turner. But my favourite advice for twentysomethings is that those annoying friends of friends who *always* seem to be around will

definitely disappear. It's great news, really. For me, it happened naturally at first. I hated having to spend Saturdays watching rugby in pubs so, voooosh, out went the poshos. I hated being talked over at dinner parties so, voooosh, out went the lawyers. I hated ketamine so out went the Bristolians (that's a joke, obviously, I love ketamine).

What I don't say is that it gets way harder post-30. At the extreme end of defriending, I developed a moral code that sat at odds with the casual racism and sexism of my old school friends. Where they saw banter, I saw bigotry. There's only so many times your non-English mum can be the butt of someone's 'jokes', no matter

how tight you once were with them. Thank u, next – as Ariana Grande would say.

Over time, I realised that so many London friendships are rooted in long-term shared experiences (mainly the big institutions like work, school or uni). We're bonded by having once been in the trenches together, but it doesn't half make things feel stale if all you ever talk about are past glories.

So lately, I've embraced newer friendships like never before. Joy is joy. So what if it's sparked by someone you've only known for a couple of weeks? Having one exciting new thing in common is better than having 100 old, endlessly raked over memories. It also helped me to think about what I truly love in a friend, so I came up with this: anyone who can have a 5am conversation at 7pm. From there, it was easy.

It was my birthday last week. I had five friends around me. It was fantastic. ■

SCARE AWAY YOUR WORRIES



Climb The O2

You might be harnessed to a handrail but that doesn't make the springy steps of the 53-metre climb to the top of The O2 any less terrifying.

→ The O2. ⊖ North Greenwich. From £30.



Throw some axes

Okay, so this might not be as scary as Christian Bale in a room covered with plastic sheets. But sinking some steel sure will take your mind off work stress.

→ Whistle Punks. ⊖ Vauxhall. From £22.



Go white-water rafting

Taking on high-octane twists and turns in a big rubber raft is guaranteed to provide literal squeaky bum time, especially if you go overboard.

→ Lee Valley White Water Centre. Waltham Cross rail. From £50.

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Chestertons Polo in the Park

What is it? A three-day polo fest at Hurlingham Park.

Why go? To kick off your summer with a day of fast and furious horseplay. Get your glad rags on and sip champagne in the grandstand as you watch the action unfold.

Wait, how much? Tickets start from £25, saving you up to 22 percent.

→ Hurlingham Park. ⊖ Putney Bridge. Jun 5-7 (Sun sold out).

www.timeout.com/polointhepark20



Lan Kwai Fong

What is it? Unlimited East Asian food, games and a glass of prosecco.

Why go? For a 90-minute feast with more than 40 dishes to choose from. This mega-menu features bao, dumplings, sushi, noodles and everything else you'd expect. Plus you can test your ball skills in a game of high-tech beer pong.

Wait, how much? It's 64 percent less for you lot: this offer is just £19.80.

→ Lan Kwai Fong. ⊖ Chalk Farm.

www.timeout.com/lankwaihong20

My Chocolate

What is it? A chocolate-making masterclass for beginners.

Why go? To learn the trade from a veteran chocolatier (and eat copious amounts of the good stuff while doing it). Plus, you also get to make a bunch of tasty treats to take home.

Wait, how much? Can you put a price on the taste of chocolate that you've made yourself? Yes, and it's up to 51 percent less than normal: from £29.

→ Various locations.

www.timeout.com/mychocolate

Portrait Drawing Course

What is it? A six-hour drawing class for beginners in the epic surroundings of the National Portrait Gallery.

Why go? Because there may be no better place on earth to learn how to draw faces. You'll find inspiration at every turn as the expert tutors teach you how to sketch the perfect profile.

Wait, how much? Normally it's £99, but for you? Just £39.

→ National Portrait Gallery. ⊖ Charing Cross.

www.timeout.com/portraitcourse

Vierne 150 Festival

What is it? A series of top-notch organ recitals at St Paul's Cathedral.

Why go? To be blown away by the musical magnificence of Louis Vierne. For the 150th anniversary of his birth, some of the world's top musicians will take the stage in one of London's most iconic venues.

Wait, how much? We're offering you half off, so tickets are only £6 per performance.

→ St Paul's Cathedral. ⊖ St Paul's.

www.timeout.com/vierne150

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Travel

Edited by **Ellie Walker-Arnott**
timeout.com/travel

Marrakesh's coolest watering holes

How to find a drink in the Red City

CROWNED AFRICA'S FIRST Capital of Culture this year, Marrakesh is an ancient caravanserai (that's shelter along a former trade route fyi) city hurtling into the twenty-first century. Yet inside the old medina many aspects of life remain traditional, shaped by Islamic practice. The local drinking scene is fuelled by mint tea and coffee rather than booze. Bars still exist, but they're rarely advertised and usually double as restaurants for expats and travellers. In recent years, though, the choice of venues has improved significantly to encompass stylish rooftops and experimental cocktail dens – you just need to know where to look. In March, the start of spring ushers in peak season, and it's the perfect temperature for sundowner sessions.

Kabana

The medina's newest bar, laidback Kabana is a fun palm-filled rooftop that sashays to an upbeat rhythm. There's an overt African influence, with batik-fabric menus and uniforms from local brand Akéwa, but it's also one of the only places



Kabana

in the medina to stock wine from Europe and the Americas. Watch the Koutoubia Mosque's floodlights create a spectral silhouette at dusk.
→ www.kabana-marrakech.com

Chichaoua

Pronounced shishawa, this mid-century-styled tea room above the busy Place d'Epices is a glimmer of contemporary Marrakesh inside the souks. It's a complete one-off, serving teas such as rooibos chai with rice milk and honey, and a modern take on Moroccan mint tea that's gently heated, rather than boiled, at 70C for exactly three minutes. It's made with herbs including verbena and absinthe plucked from pots on the counter. Listen to the record player spinning crackly '50s tunes as you sip your cuppa.
→ www.chichaouamarrakech.com

Café Arabe

Service can be frustratingly blasé at this three-floor institution in one of the medina's oldest districts, but that doesn't stop it packing out. The



bacchanalian atmosphere is its biggest selling point. Head straight to the partially covered rooftop with its painted cedar-wood ceilings and, if you haven't booked, hunt out the man with the list to put your name down for a table. One side is for drinking; the other serves Italian comfort food and Moroccan classics.
→ www.cafearabe.com

Kosybar

Kosybar is the Kasbah district's go-to, beside the Bahia and Badia palaces. In the daytime it provides front-row seats for people-watching above Place des Ferblantiers on a cascade of sun-spangled terraces. By night, glowing lanterns



Bacha Coffee

Kabana

and chandeliers cast sultry shadows into seating nooks across three floors of dimly lit riad salons.
 → www.kosybar.com

Barometre

Local brothers Hamza and Soufiane Hadni opened this subterranean cocktail bar to create drinks that Hamza says are designed to ‘taste first with your eyes’. It’s dark, clandestine and, if you didn’t know better, you’d think you’d fallen down Alice’s rabbit hole into a New York prohibition bar. Jugs of aged negronis line the walls, spices and customised bitters sit along the bar and, of course, there’s some blowtorch action to add theatre.
 → www.facebook.com/barometremarrakech



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Maison Arabe

Bacha Coffee

This ritzy coffee house is inside Dar El Bacha's Museum of Confluences, once the palace where Marrakesh's warlord pasha Thami el Glaoui bestowed decadent gifts of coffee on visiting celebs and politicians (including Churchill) during the 1920s, '30s and '40s. Bacha Coffee opened in 2019 with the aim of resurrecting his Arabica obsession. Its gilded salons are sumptuous, as are the golden coffee pots, which conspire with whipped cream, raw sugar and cracked vanilla to create perhaps the continent's most decadent coffee-drinking experience.

→ www.bachacoffee.com

El Fenn

Behind closed doors (ring for admittance), the duchess of the Marrakesh riad scene is also the medina's most sophisticated bar. It's a lovely thing, with French wine, day beds, live-music Sunday brunch, views of Koutoubia's minaret and a Marrakshi mixologist who ensures El Fenn's cocktail menu reflects Moroccan flavours such as mint and orange. The signature drink is a sunset-pink margarita with homemade hibiscus syrup, garnished with rose buds.

→ www.el-fenn.com

Terrasse des épices

There's a small drop-in bar area at the rear, but it's worth booking ahead for dinner with drinks at this slick French-owned rooftop venue in the souks – especially if you want a seat before 9pm. The

NEED TO KNOW

During Ramadan, the Muslim holy month, Marrakesh locals fast from dawn until sunset. Although tourists are not expected to observe the fast, some find it uncomfortable eating and drinking when the locals cannot. In 2020, the dates of Ramadan are April 23 to May 23.

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Travel

setting above a building housing contemporary designers sets the tone: expect creative food and trendy punters, who come for its regular DJ sets.
→ www.terrasedesepices.com

Le Salama

The glass-encased 'sky bar' atop Le Salama is so close to Djemaa El Fna you can sometimes hear the square's rampant Gnaoua drumming over its Arabic dance soundtrack. A ceiling of living foliage dripping from hanging plant pots, inspired by YSL's Majorelle Gardens, makes this rooftop greenhouse a zen place to bask in the late-afternoon sun. Le Salama serves a mean Moscow Mule laced with spicy, fresh ginger, but the icing on the cake is that it's two for one on loads of drinks all day. There's also good, if a little pricy, Moroccan food, and shisha pipes.
→ www.facebook.com/lesalamamarrakech

Maison Arabe

The grand dame of the Marrakesh travel scene is Maison Arabe (c 1946), the first dining establishment for foreigners inside the medina. It's still a celebrated restaurant (and a hotel), but we're here for the Jazz Bar. Though not original, the décor is art deco colonial to a tee, with carved pillars and a hammered copper bar. The service is pleasantly starched. Order an aperitif and wait for the grand piano to warm up. ■ *Lorna Parkes*
→ www.lamaisonarabe.com



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ESSENTIAL Rotterdam

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Blom's Cube Houses

What's the deal with Rotterdam?

'This could be Rotterdam or anywhere, Liverpool or Rome, 'cause Rotterdam is anywhere, anywhere alone.' Er, wrong, Paul Heaton. The Beautiful South did the Netherlands' second city a serious disservice. Even being there without human contact couldn't dim this city's peculiar glow. Razed during the Second World War, Rotterdam saw its opportunity to reinvent itself and ran with it. Repurposed warehouses, glitzy skyscrapers and showpiece buildings designed by Rem Koolhaas and Piet Blom line the centre's waterways. How many cities would stick a sculpture known as the 'Buttplug Gnome' in a major square? Or set up a floating dairy farm with 32 real cows? Out-there design seeps into every corner of Europe's largest port city. Eurovision 2020, from May 12 to 16, has found a suitably flamboyant home.

If you only do one thing

Hop on a bike and take in the eye-popping architecture. Start with the horseshoe-shaped **Markthal**, where a striking 36,000-square-foot mural looms over 100 food stands. Across the road are Blom's iconic **Cube Houses**, and just north you'll find **Luchtsingel**, a crowdfunded walkway that snakes through the centre.

Dine in style

Op Het Dak serves healthy dishes made with fruit, veg and honey from its own rooftop farm. The apple cake and citywide views are unmissable. For dinner, order the tasting menus at ultra-modish **Héroïne**. They spotlight little-known ingredients like lovage and sea buckthorn.

Eat on the cheap

Take a water taxi to the studenty Katendrecht peninsula. Indoor market **Fenix Food Factory** (currently closed but soon to reopen down the road) is the main draw. Just over Deliplein Square, **Kopi Soesoe** serves homemade cakes and Indonesian cardamom coffee.

HANG OUT IN THIS 'HOOD

With its romantic villas and sprawling woodland, **Kralingen** is a haven of rural calm just east of the centre. Stay at the **The Slaak Rotterdam**, a boutique design hotel located in a former newspaper HQ. You could do much worse for scenery than the **Kralingse Plas** boating lake and the **Arboretum Trompenburg** botanic gardens.

Drink like a local

The local specialty is jenever, but for more modern drinking, go to an epic craft beer tasting session at **Kaapse Maria**. **The LisaMarie** serves decent-value wines and snacks in a classy setting, while for top-notch original cocktails, the basement bar at **Hotel NewYork** is your best shout.

Stay up late

Make a beeline for **Witte de Withstraat**, the city's de facto high street and nightlife hotspot. Built using recycled aircraft panels and train seats, eclectic **Worm** puts on everything from gabber to gqom to Dutch trap nights. Gin bar **Ballroom** makes a good warm-up act.

Stock up on souvenirs

Rotterdam is a treasure chest for stylish shoppers. Head to **Objet Trouvé** on Pannekoekstraat for one-off women's garments and statement jewellery and **Depot Rotterdam** for flashy homeware. Complete your Rotterdam look with a bright nylon carrier from **Susan Bijl**.

Get cultural

You could spend an entire weekend roaming the museum quarter. The Rem Koolhaas-designed **Kunsthall** is a maze of contemporary art, while the **Het Nieuwe Instituut** is one for design heads. Don't miss the **Huis Sonneveld**, a perfectly proportioned Dutch functionalist villa.

Take a day trip

To the west of Rotterdam, **Schiedam** is the Netherlands' gin capital. Jenever – traditional Dutch gin – distilleries abound in this old-style city. Soak up the history at **Jenevermuseum**.

Only in Rotterdam

Floating architecture has taken off in a big way. Eco-project **Recycled Park** has been built using litter collected from the city's waterways, while the world's first **Floating Farm** can be found in Merwehaven dock. Nodding to a future where rising sea levels mean cities have to provide more of their own food, this farm's 32 cows are milked by robots for all to see. ■ **Huw Oliver**

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Things to Do

Edited by **Katie McCabe**
timeout.com/thingstodo @timeoutlondon

Extreme reading

It's World Book Day this Thursday! Leave boring book clubs on read to explore dystopian futures, argue about Marx and trade notes on Nordic noir. Illustration *Dave Bain*

Left Book Club

Launched by leftist publisher Victor Gollancz in 1936, the Left Book Club has since been rebooted for the twenty-first century and counts Jeremy Corbyn among its fans. Each title, usually non-fiction about radical politics, is selected by an expert panel. If you like, you can start up a group in your own area – and get a free tote as a thank you.

→ Next event: Simon Hannah's 'A Party with Socialists in It'. Nicholas Nickleby. Crouch Hill Overground. Tue Mar 3.

Books Without Borders

Don't limit your literary horizons to great American novels and the British canon. Whether it's a bit of Nordic noir or classic Korean fiction, this collective is entirely focused on international and translated reads. After a few sessions you'll be able to impress your mates with obscure book suggestions of your own.

→ Next event: Deepa Anappara's 'Djinn Control'. Location revealed to members of Books Without Borders Meetup page. Sun Mar 8. Free.

Radical Readers

Every month the Radical Readers gather at The Meeting House in Newington Green to read works by revolutionary figures associated with the building. It's having a refurb, so they've decamped to The Alma pub in Islington. Free copies of the upcoming book are provided at every meeting, so there's no excuse not to keep up.

→ Next event: 'Unitarian Women: A Legacy of Dissent', edited by Ann Peart. The Alma. Canonbury Overground. Mar 10. Free.

Forgotten Fiction Book Club

Can't keep up with the 'cover reveals' flooding your Instagram feed? Take time out from the onslaught of new publications by reading lesser-known works from big-time authors like Toni Morrison or one-time hits that fell out of public consciousness like Vera Caspary's 'Laura'. Don't expect anything that was on your GCSE English reading list.

→ Next event: Waterstones Gower St. ☉ Goodge St. Mar 25. £8 incl free cocktail.

Okha: The Queer + Black Book Club

Literature and plays by African, Caribbean and Afro-Latinx authors are the focus of OKHA, which means story or tales in the Edo language of Nigeria. It's more than a book club, mixing it up with art exhibitions and Q&As. Next on the agenda is 'Sista!', an anthology of writing by same-gender-loving women of African and Caribbean descent.

→ Next event: see www.instagram.com/prim.black for info.

Self-Care as an Act of Warfare: A Black Woman's Reading Group

On the third Thursday of the month, a collective of black women (trans, intersex and cis) meet among the shelves of Housmans to discuss black feminist literature. The bookshop stocks the largest range of radical pamphlets of any shop in Britain, so expect to leave with a bag stuffed full of protest flyers.

→ Next event: Housmans Bookshop. ☉ King's Cross. Mar 19. Free, email in advance.





PostApocalyptic Book Club

If you're the kind of person that has a zombie apocalypse contingency plan tacked to your wall, this literary league focusing on decaying civilisations will be right up your tumbleweed-strewn street. The group's been meeting at the Star of Kings pub for more than a decade. If 'Shaun of the Dead' is anything to go by, the best way to tackle dystopian scenarios is from the inside of a bar. → Next event: Vicki Jarrett's 'Always North'. Star of Kings. ☉ King's Cross. Mar 31. Free.

London Marxism Reading Group

Want to relive your uni seminars? This club dedicated to the father of socialism promises intense debates but no exams. Time to lecture your Hinge matches on late capitalism. ■ → Next event: see www.facebook.com/londonmarxism



By Alexandra Sims
Who is always prepared for a zombie apocalypse.

LSO

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For details, see wildlifeforall.org

SOMETHING FOR THE WEEKEND

Friday



South London Screendance

Does your knowledge of dance films begin and end with the trailer for 'Step Up'? Get to Deptford for a festival that looks at the interplay between choreography and cinema. Just don't expect to see Channing Tatum thrusting to the lyrics of 'Pony'.

→ The Albany, Deptford rail. Fri Mar 6. £9.

DANCE Flawa 2020 – Launch Party with Riobamba

FLAWA stands for Festival of Latin American Women in the Arts – join the group for a futuristic club set in a massive artspace. → Earth. Dalston Kingsland Overground. Fri Mar 6. £8.

DRESS UP Dancing Barefoot

Unleash your gnarly tootsies upon the world at Moth Club's lysergic International Women's Day party with sets from Lynks Afrika and The Femme Collective. Dress code is 'cult'. → Moth Club. Hackney Central Overground. Fri Mar 6. Free.

Saturday



Found Footage Festival: Volume 9

Two men have spent 25 years scouring garage sales for VHS tapes to bring you this: the live equivalent of a 5m deep dive on YouTube, with laughs instead of tears.

→ Soho Theatre. ⇄ Tottenham Court Rd. Thu Mar 5-Sat Mar 7. £12.50-£18.

WATCH Mitcham VR Festival

Mitcham is about to become an epicentre of technology with a day of '360-degree films'. It includes a VR version of that documentary Judi Dench made about trees.

→ General Giles Social Club. Mitcham Eastfields rail. Sat Mar 7. Prices vary.

YEGHES DA! Kernow in the City

Head for the south-west without having to ride the sleeper train at a mini music fest for St Piran's Day.

→ Rich Mix. Shoreditch High St Overground. Sat Mar 7. £12.

Sunday

Toni Morrison: A Celebration

It's been 50 years since 'The Bluest Eye' was first published. See Afua Hirsch, Jade Anouka, and more pay tribute to the Nobel Prize-winning author's work through joyful readings and performances.

→ Queen Elizabeth Hall. ⇄ Waterloo. Sun Mar 8. £25.



PEDAL IBikeLondon International Women's Day Ride

Cycling isn't going to address gender inequality, but joining a bike gang and furiously pedalling through London is a handy way to channel the anger it creates.

→ Meet outside the National Theatre. ⇄ Waterloo. Sun Mar 8. Free.

LISTEN Women in Focus Festival

Make art, make noise and make new pals at an IWD festival that's about making space for *all* women.

→ Poplar Union. Langdon Park DLR. Sun Mar 8. Free.

More ideas for IWD at timeout.com/thingstodo

Get rolling!

How to explore the best of London's Cycleways this spring

More than 100 miles of protected cycle routes have been constructed in London since 2016, which means there has never been a better time to explore the capital on two wheels

They used to be called Cycle Superhighways and Quietways; now, with new Cycleways, they're merging into one nifty growing network. Why are they awesome? Well, they're segregated from main roads or located on quiet back streets, parks and canals. The design is intended to make them safer – and they're clearly signposted, so you won't lose your bearings. Plus, they connect neighbourhoods across London, making it easier than ever to slot some exercise into your commute. To get you into gear, we've teamed up with Transport for London to bring you some spoke-tacular itineraries. And remember, no bike, no worries: you can hire a Santander Cycle from as little as £2. Now, get pedalling!



C6

King's Cross to Kentish Town

Best for: Sightseeing with a spot of shopping

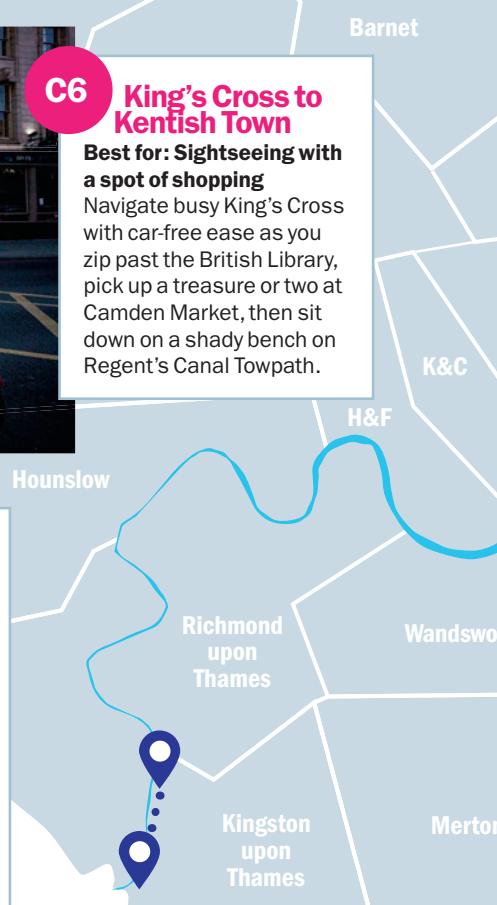
Navigate busy King's Cross with car-free ease as you zip past the British Library, pick up a treasure or two at Camden Market, then sit down on a shady bench on Regent's Canal Towpath.

C28

Kingston

Best for: Thames-side exploration

It doesn't matter how many times you cycle beside the Thames; the experience is refreshing. This picturesque little riverside route in Kingston beside Hampton Court Park is part of the ever-expanding Go Cycle Kingston programme; you may find yourself stopping to take selfies as you pass lush parkland.



Here's a wheely good idea...

If you're still getting a handle on bike life, why not investigate the free courses available in your area? TfL funds classes tailored to new and regular cyclists – search 'TfL Cycle Skills' or visit your local borough's website.



C20 **Enfield to Palmers Green**

Best for: A super-chill Sunday
 There is nothing like a morning trip to a farmers' market to say, 'I have entered a more wholesome phase of my life.' Start this relaxing ride by winding past the river through Enfield Park, then roll on to the Sidings N21 farmers' market for locally grown produce.



C23 **Walthamstow to Whipps Cross**

Best for: A little bit of everything for the bike-curious person
 Back in 2014, Waltham Forest was selected as one of three boroughs to receive funding for the 'Mini Holland' programme, designed to improve the borough's cycling infrastructure. These days, you can meander through pretty Walthamstow with its ancient parks, great shops and cute galleries and museums, before zipping across to Walthamstow Wetlands for some primo decompression (and rare goose-spotting) time. Want to get lost in greenery? Connect to the Whipps Cross-Millfields Park section of this Cycleway and explore Epping Forest's 2,400 hectares.



Walthamstow Cycle Hub

C17 **Elephant and Castle to Burgess Park**

Best for: A seamless connection to SE
 Whether you're in search of green space just south of the river or you've been craving a more low-key commute, you're in luck: this route will take you from the new Elephant Park through to Burgess Park, with a connecting Cycleway to Camberwell.



POWER TO THE PEDAL!

Here is something that will ring your bell: TfL and the London boroughs will add an additional six Cycleways to the network this year. Get ready for Cycleways connecting Oval and Waterloo, Tower Bridge and Canada Water, and Finsbury Park and Highbury Fields, for a start. Explore the expanding network at tfl.gov.uk/maps/cycle

→ Find plenty more affordable outings at www.timeout.com/off-peak



Things to Do

CELEBRATE

C Wow: Women of the World Festival

It might be ten years old, but this weekend of lectures, debates and workshops is still the biggest International Women's Day event in London. Go to see speakers like Shazia Mirza, Scarlett Curtis, Sandi Toksvig, Deborah Frances-White and 'Don't Touch My Hair' author Emma Dabiri. And catch panel talks on the future of trans activism and what it means to be intersex.

→ Southbank Centre.
↻ Waterloo. Fri Mar 6-Sun Mar 8. £40 day pass.

E International Womxn's Day Wikipedia Edit-athon

Make sure women past and present are getting the attention they deserve online at this mass Wikipedia editing sesh. Help update and create new Wiki entries on subjects related to gender, feminism and the arts. Also, there'll be tutorials, reference materials, refreshments and free internet access, but bring your own laptop.

→ Live Art Development Agency. ↻ Bethnal Green. Thu Mar 5. Free.

E International Women's Day Open Brewing

Whether you're a brewer by trade or just have a home-brewing hobby, London's female hop-fanatics are invited to get hands-on at this collaborative brew. Join to help out with mashing, adding hops and prepping ingredients before relaxing at the bar. Who run the brew? Girls.

→ Temple Brew House.
↻ Temple. Sun Mar 8. Free.

TO DO

The best events in your area

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

TRIBUTE INK LATE
6.30pm, 4 March
FREE ENTRY

NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM
↻ Sloane Square

TRIBUTE INK
THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

Life drawing | Tattoo talks | Temporary tattoos
British Army Rock Band | Themed drinks

In partnership with
THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION
NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM

nam.ac.uk
#TributeInk

DRINK

C Southern Comfort presents Mardi Gras

A subterranean venue in a Waterloo graffiti tunnel is being turned into a New Orleans scene for this hoedown with music from Beyoncé's fave: hip hop artist Big Freedia.

→ 26 Leake St. ↻ Waterloo.
Wed Mar 4-Thu Mar 5.
£12, includes a free cocktail.

SHOP

S Sample Spring

A village fête with a London twist, this pop-up market is packed with stalls from new designers, craft-makers and seasonal produce sellers. Expect live music, street theatre and terrarium and poster workshops.

→ Peninsula Garden.
↻ North Greenwich.
Sat Mar 7. Free entry.

N North London Vintage Market

This market may be small, but it has a solid stall line-up focusing on items for the home. Look out for quirky furniture and retro fabrics that'll stop your gaff from becoming a homage to Ikea.

→ Hornsey Parish Church.
↻ Highgate.
Sat Mar 7-Sun Mar 8. £1.50.

EXPLORE

London Book and Screen Week

A tribute to 40 years of 'Yes Minister', a conversation with crime fiction author Lynda La Plante and a Q&A with Scarlett Sabet and Jimmy Page are on the bill for the sixth edition of this celebration of books, films and TV programmes.

→ Various venues. Mon Mar 9-Mar 15. Prices vary.

LISTEN

S Space Jams

At this celestial listening experience jazz pianist Ashley Henry will perform two improvised sets as you fill your eyes with brilliantly trippy planetarium visuals.

→ Royal Observatory. Cutty Sark DLR. Mon Mar 9. From £17.

W Gold & Ashes: Our Stories

At this part of the Portobello Open Process Festival for west London artists, you can hear storytelling and poetry from people affected by the Grenfell fire and learn how the 2017 tragedy has changed lives and laws.

→ Bay20 Community Centre.
↻ Ladbrooke Grove.
Sat Mar 7. Free.

EXCLUSIVE

Grab life by the balls with half-price tickets to **Ballie Ballerson**. Get entry to everyone's favourite ball-pit and bar from just £2.75.

TIMEOUT.COM/BALLIE20

Browse the day away at
[timeout.com/markets](https://www.timeout.com/markets)



Film

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



FILM OF THE WEEK

PIXAR IS KNOWN for tackling the chewy stuff head on – death, the end of childhood, a rodent running a restaurant – but even so, the central conceit of its new fantasy adventure takes some adjusting to. A pair of grieving elf brothers turn to magic to reanimate, for 24 emotional hours, the dad they never really knew. But the spell is broken halfway through, leaving them with, well, half a dad. With only the legs operational and the missing top half flopping around under layers of clothes, the three bluff their way through a quest to find a magical gem and finish the job. A rat that can cook? Sure. A loose remake of '80s corpse-com 'Weekend at Bernie's'? Did not see that coming.

The quest's surprising third wheel offers the movie's funniest moments – there's a drink-driving gag that you're point-blank never explaining to your kids – but it's the two teenage brothers who provide its heart and soul. Director Dan Scanlon ('Monsters University') has popped across the Disney lot and raided Marvel for the pair: Tom Holland voices the initially magic-wary, study-focused Ian; Chris Pratt has a blast as his older brother Barley, a larger-than-life loafer with his head in the kingdom's

long-abandoned lore (he drives a van called Guinevere). He's on 'the world's longest gap year' grumbles their mum (Julia Louis-Dreyfus), who just wants help keeping unicorns away from the garbage.

Set in a fantastical land populated by evolved cyclops, fauns, mages and all manner of mythical fauna who have switched from magic to mod cons, 'Onward' is a cometh-of-age tale that makes playful capital from our habit of turning the past into

touristy kitsch. If you've ever been to one of those novelty medieval banquets, you'll get a kick out of the Manticore's Tavern: a gimmicky

fantasy dining hall that's presided over with weary resignation by an ex-monster, the Manticore (voiced by Octavia Spencer), who's been forced to sell out her rip-roaring past. Does this conceit feel a bit rich coming from a company that literally built a Magic Kingdom? Yes. Yes, it does. Then the adventure gallops

Dawn of the dad

'Onward'



WHAT IS IT...

Two teenage elves go on a quest to bring back the dad they never knew.

WHY GO...

The ending is one of Pixar's very best.

→ Director Dan Scanlon (U) 107 mins.

on and the thought disappears in Guinevere's rear view.

Yet, if 'Onward' seeks to summon the spirit of 'The Goonies' – of magic buried beneath the everyday – its blood-sugar levels never hit those giddy heights. The laughs aren't quite as raucous as they ought to be; the riffs not quite as clever (though it feels significant to spot Pixar's first LGBTQ+ character, even in passing). There's a little inspiration missing in its bog-standard hero's journey – even if the bog is a magical one.

Where the movie truly comes into its own is in its boldly framed, heart-wrenching coda. It'd be criminal to spoil it, but suffice to say it compares well to Pixar's very best endings, from the final farewell in 'Toy Story 3' to Anton Ego's review in 'Ratatouille'. 'Onward' is inspired by its director's relationship with his dad and suddenly that's how it feels: like a sepia snapshot of something deeply personal and moving. Any Antons out there would argue that it's a moment of pure magic that shows up the rest of the movie. I'd say that it's the jewel in a pretty presentable crown.



By Phil de Semlyen
Who owes everything to his dad, especially his love of bad Michael Caine movies.

Film

INTRODUCING Mark Stanley

Who is he and what's he up to?

He's a 31-year-old English actor on the cusp of a moment.

Oh yeah?

Out soon are 'Sulphur and White', in which he plays real-life abuse survivor David Tait, and 'Run', a Springsteen-inspired fictional tale of a bored Scottish fish-factory worker.

He was in 'Game of Thrones', right?

He sure was. Stanley played Night's Watch man Grenn, who died fighting a giant in a tunnel. 'It was fantastic,' says the Yorkshire-born actor, 'but standing three or four back from the lead man is not a huge learning curve. By my fourth year, I'd worked with Mike Leigh [on 'Mr Turner'] and was ready for more.'

So he's a full-on leading man now?

Yes. Since 'Thrones', Stanley has taken on intimate dramas like Clio Barnard's 'Dark River'. 'Sulphur and White' and 'Run' follow suit. The latter, he says, deals with 'people who feel they can't escape their decisions' while the former 'shows the damage caused by child abuse'.



Is he only into the dark stuff, then?

'I'm a happy-go-lucky guy!' he says. But he is drawn to 'unlocking someone's psychology'. He's big on research too. 'For "Run", I worked in a fish factory.' For 'Sulphur and White' he spent hours with Tait. 'We'd talk in the morning, at lunch and say night-night of an evening.'

Didn't he play a Knight of Ren in 'Star Wars: The Force Awakens'?

'That's true,' laughs Stanley. 'I did a week's filming, most of it a battle sequence with Adam Driver, but I've never seen it, so I don't know if I'm in it.' Barely, is the answer, though he's not fussed. 'It's "Star Wars", an absolute global franchise, but it's the least significant role I've done.'

What's he doing next?

Keeping his options open. 'There's an ITV two-parter ["Honour"] coming out in early spring,' he says, but after that he's on the lookout. 'It's an open playing field at the minute. It's quite exciting to feel that way.' ■

Dan Jolin

→ 'Sulphur and White' opens Fri Mar 6.

'Run' opens Mar 13.

Sulphur and White



ITS OBLIQUE TITLE refers to a species of butterfly, but there's plenty of sulphur emanating from this drama charting the devastating after-effects of childhood sexual abuse. Most of it stems from Mark Stanley's alpha City trader David Tait, once an abused child, now a man who treats life like a war, each human interaction an engagement to be won or exploited. It's an arresting performance: steely and clenched, but with a hint of vulnerability. Stanley isn't afraid to dial up to total bastard when the scene calls for it. Which is often.

What 'Sulphur and White' does well is show how the deep wounds of childhood abuse have led Tait to develop this commoditised worldview as a protective carapace; and how well, paradoxically, it serves him in his job. There are great scenes of Tait standing in the middle of turbulent trading floors, coolly scoring big wins and the patronage of his boss and surrogate father figure (Alistair Petrie, brilliantly vulpine). Soon all the greed-is-good trappings follow: fast cars, insane parties and the

WHAT IS IT...

A real-life story about a City trader who was abused as a child.

WHY GO...

Mark Stanley gives it pathos and a hard-edged core.

→ Director Julian Jarrold (15) 121 mins.



love of his colleague Vanessa (Emily Beecham, providing a soulful counterpoint). Why get therapy when you can get rich?

The answer comes as the film jags back to Tait's childhood in South Africa. There, his boozing mum (Anna Friel) and bitter dad (Dougray Scott, persuasively awful)

barely notice when he falls victim to a group of local paedophiles. There are heavy-handed visual metaphors involving those butterflies and haloed doorways. It definitely works best when Stanley is on screen and under the self-destructive hex of that past abuse. 'You're just me in a better suit' spits his poisonous, now-ageing father in a standout scene. The scary thought is that he may not be entirely wrong. ■ *Phil de Semlyen*

Toni Morrison: The Pieces I Am



MANY AUTHORS OF towering reputation are serious and self-important, but in this affectionate, incisive documentary Toni Morrison proves to be as funny as she is intellectually rigorous. Spanning her long life, it paints a detailed portrait of an extraordinary woman and the trail she blazed through American literature with novels like 'The Bluest Eyes' and 'Beloved'.

'I'm very, very smart early in the morning,' Morrison laughs, explaining how she fitted in writing around work as a teacher and editor while raising her two children. But she also discusses her breakthrough as a black, female writer; the ways that her work reflected her times and the response of white literary America to it. Early reviews thought her somewhat 'parochial' for writing about black people; Morrison's career put them to shame. She speaks with conviction on race in her books and on camera here.

While there are interviews with critics, activists and superfans like Oprah Winfrey, the main voice here is Morrison's. She stares straight into the camera as she remembers learning her first bad word and reflects on working with Muhammad Ali. She's charming, authoritative, and ferociously intelligent. 'I think she captured the essence of what it means to be human, to be alive and to be here on this Earth,' says Winfrey. She's speaking about one of Morrison's characters, but it goes double for the author. ■ *Helen O'Hara*

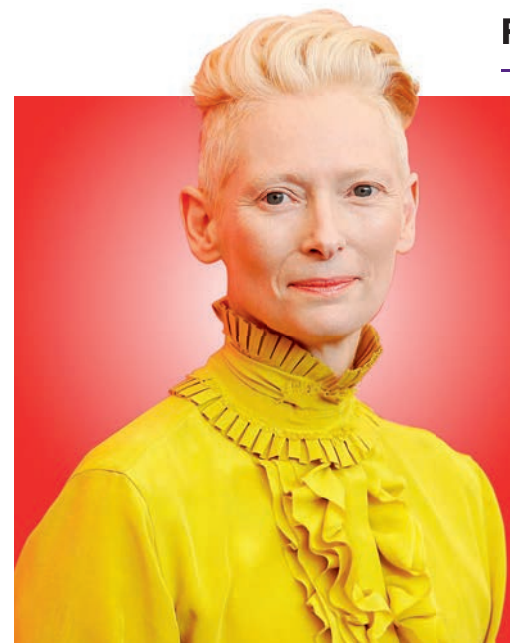
WHAT IS IT...

A portrait of the Nobel Prize-winning author and editor who died last year.

WHY GO...

To see the lengths Oprah will go to get someone's number.

→ Director Timothy Greenfield-Sanders (12A)
120 mins.



Celebrating Swinton

Five of her directors on why Tilda is awesome



'My very first day as a director was shooting the introduction of Tilda's character. Everything worked. We finished early. It was the most gentle deflowering imaginable. What did I feel when she won the Oscar? Stupid grinning pride.'

Tony Gilroy, who directed Swinton in 'Michael Clayton' (2007)



'She has lots of positive energy. She had to pretend to kick donkeys [in the film] but was very careful that no donkey was harmed. The donkeys had a nice time. The stunt people on the donkeys were another story. She walloped them.'

Armando Iannucci, 'The Personal History of David Copperfield' (2019)



'What's my favourite thing about Tilda? Both on and off set, it's her subtle humour, irony and pure unrestrained giddiness that makes being with her so exquisite.'

Lynn Hershman Leeson, 'Conceiving Ada' (1997), 'Teknolust' (2002), 'Strange Culture' (2007), 'Tania Libre' (2017)



'I first met Tilda almost 20 years ago in LA at a concert by The Darkness. She was wearing glittery Bowie-esque platform boots and towered over me (and I'm almost 6' 2"!'). For some magical reason we immediately connected, and our friendship and collaborations seemed completely inevitable.'

Jim Jarmusch, 'Broken Flowers' (2005), 'The Limits of Control' (2009), 'Only Lovers Left Alive' (2017), 'The Dead Don't Die' (2019)



'After five years of [preparation] for "Orlando", we finally found ourselves on a Leningrad ice rink in winter, shooting a banquet scene. After the first take we hugged and laughed and cried; we had arrived. There is a deep joy in collaborating with someone with the appetite to go as far as it is possible to go.'

→ BFI Southbank's Tilda Swinton season runs until Mar 18.

ALSO OPENING

MILITARY WIVES →



'We don't have the privilege of being against the war, we're married to it,' says Lisa (Sharon Horgan), as her military wives' choir walks past Afghanistan war protestors in this warm comedy-drama. The choir gradually transforms into a legit outfit, with a mini turf war between Lisa and the clipped Kate (Kristin Scott Thomas) providing fun tension. What should be a euphoric and cathartic finale falls flat and the third act gets bogged down, though the rest is often poignant and funny. As with 'The Full Monty', director



Peter Cattaneo gives each of the ensemble a moment to shine. One solo act stands out, though: KST is MVP. *Sophie Monks Kaufman*

ESCAPE FROM PRETORIA



Daniel Radcliffe sweats convincingly in this jail-break thriller following two anti-apartheid activists into (and out of) a grisly Pretoria jail. There's nail-chewing tension

aplenty, although the character arcs and context are functional at best. *Trevor Johnston*

FANTASY ISLAND



Seventies kitsch turns to unscary nonsense in this horror redo of one-time telly hit 'Fantasy Island' (the one where Hervé Villechaize shouts 'The Plane! The Plane!' a lot). Michael Peña plays a mysterious island owner who welcomes a group of thin archetypes ashore for paper-thin frights. Director Jeff Wadlow shows that the lamentable 'Truth or Dare' was no one-off. ■ *Tomris Laffly*

All the biggest new films reviewed at [timeout.com/film](https://www.timeout.com/film)

Music & Nightlife

Edited by Oliver Keens
timeout.com/music @timeoutmusic

FIRST LOOK

Lafayette at Goods Way

Come have a little peek around this new music venue in King's Cross

WE ALL KNOW it's a difficult time for live music venues and clubs. But we at Time Out also know just how many great places keep on opening in the city too. We're not complacent: too many voids are opening up. But at the same time, we like to celebrate when the doom-and-gloom narrative goes the other way.

Lafayette is a new, two-floored, 600-capacity music and nightlife venue in King's Cross. It's located within a project called Goods Way, named after the road it sits on which carves up the new developments in the area that house Granary Square, Spiritland, Google's HQ and that iconic Waitrose that for some reason has live jazz bands playing in it.

The venue is run by Ben Lovett, boss of the Communion label and owner of Omeara near Borough Market. He's also one-quarter of Mumford & Sons, but today, as he shows me round in pink hard hat and pink hi-vis, he's totally in offstage work mode.

As you walk through the modest door into Goods Way, we land in The

Courtyard, which initially reminds me of Omeara but goes harder on New Orleans and Louisiana-inspired design tropes and is covered by a ceiling of falling greenery. It's primarily a street food space, with Temple of Seitan, Breddos Tacos, Duck Truck, Pomelo (a new venture from Lupins) and New York sushi makers Sushi on Jones all on-site and serving up the tasties. But there'll also be a small performance space for live music or DJs on the balcony looking over the yard.

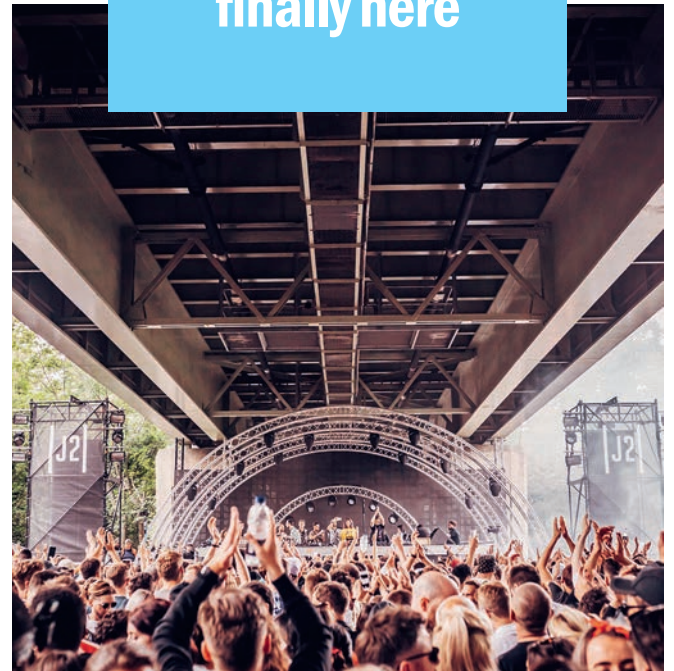
To the left of The Courtyard are two entrances. One is for Sweetwater: a cocktail bar, set across two levels, that aims to become a global cocktail destination, along the lines of NYC's The Dead Rabbit.

The other door leads to Lafayette. It's a really impressive and non-generic space, rectangular in shape with a rather tall stage stretching down most of one side of the room. Downstairs is all standing, while upstairs has a long curved balcony with banked steps so that rows of people can stand and watch the action taking place below the stage's



FESTIVAL NEWS

The Junction 2 line-up is finally here



HAVING REPLICATED ITSELF successfully, expanding from a one-day to a two-day festival, London bopathon Junction 2 has today dropped its full line-up for 2020, and it's looking more lit than a Diptyque factory.

Set in Hounslow's Boston Manor Park, and laid out over a site that takes in woodland clearings, ponds and the signature presence of the M4 motorway running above The Main Stage, Junction 2 has become a firm favourite of dance music fans wanting to bathe in a big tub of underground house and techno music faves across six stages.

Friday sees techno dream-maker **Jon Hopkins** playing live and last on The Main Stage, but head down earlier in the day for a rare set from The xx's **Romy** and breakout house superstar **Ceri**. **Nina Kraviz** will be owning The Bridge stage, with a raft of fellas up beforehand – **Four Tet**, **Midland** and **Leon Vynehall**. Meanwhile, weekend resident **Avalon Emerson** plays among the greenery of The Woods stage, where **Eris Drew** will be going back-to-back with partner **Octo Octa**.

The day after goes hard, not home, with highlights including **Blawan** in The Warehouse, **Ben Klock** and **Marcel Dettmann** playing an extended Main Stage set, plus **Amelie Lens**, **Adam Beyer**, **Dixon** and another exciting back-to-back: **Seth Troxler** and **Margaret Dygas**. We're counting down the days! ■ *Oliver Keens*

→ Junction 2 is at Boston Manor Park on Jun 5-6.

After showing me backstage – which amusingly butts up against Google's servers (break the internet, anyone?) – and a hush-hush speakeasy bit, which has incoming naughtiness written all over it, Lovett's tour is done. He tells me he's been promoting since he was 15 years old, and it's clear he has a genuine passion for music venues, that throbs as much as his pink hard hat. You can judge the fruits of his labours when it opens this week. ■

→ Goods Way is at 11 Goods Way, N1C 4DP.



By Oliver Keens
Who got accidentally locked
in a warehouse off Goods
Way as a teen (true story).

sexy proscenium arch. It naturally looks like a performance space, but with lights down low, it's also very easy to imagine it running as a club (the venue has a 4am licence on Friday and Saturday). Upstairs has an open-ended corridor loo, a lot like the Barbican's, and all facilities are gender-neutral. Two bars will keep the vibe bubbly, and as with the rest of Goods Way, it's rendered in lots of soft wood, which adds a huge amount of warmth to the room.

GIGS AND CLUBS

Zebra Katz

Days after dropping debut album 'Less Is Moor', the queer hip hop visionary plays new venue Space 289. → Space 289. Mar 26.

Palms Trax: XOYO

A long overdue residency stint for the globally loved slicer and dicer of A-grade disco and house, joined over ten weeks by guests including Acid Arab and David Vunk. → Apr 6-Jun 26.

All Points East: Bombay Bicycle Club

The indie band are the latest headliners

announced for All Points East. Support acts on the day will include Loyle Carner and Lianne La Havas. → Victoria Park. May 22.

Mighty Hoopla

Sister Sledge, C+C Music Factory and Lisa Maffia are among the latest additions to the popstastic one-dayer. → Brockwell Park. Jun 6.

Womad

Angelique Kidjo, Kate Tempest, Fatoumata Diawara and The Flaming Lips are among the headline acts announced for the world music festival. → Charlton Park. Jul 23-26.

Kingdom Festival

This ambitious new weekender is a marriage of music, design and architecture. Midland, Daniel Avery and Peach will be among acts performing on 'experimental stages and in captivating pavilions', one hosted by Spiritland. → Belvoir Festival, Grantham. Jul 24-27.

New Order

Used to think that the day would never come? The Manchester legends have announced their only UK show of 2020. → The 02. Oct 10.



AMP London

Annie Mac presents four days of gigs and music discussion at some of London's best venues. Disclosure and DJ Seinfeld have been added to the bill at Printworks on Friday, and there are still tickets to catch rising stars including Lava La Rue, Avelino and The Magic Gang. → Various venues. Wed Mar 4-Sat Mar 7.

Buy tickets at [timeout.com/gigs](https://www.timeout.com/gigs)

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POINTS
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FRI 22 MAY

Bombay Bicycle Club

LOYLE CARNER
LIANNE LA HAVAS
EVERYTHING EVERYTHING
NADINE SHAH > NICK HAKIM
NILÜFER YANYA > THE ORIELLES
GENGAHR > LIZ LAWRENCE

+ MANY MORE TO BE ANNOUNCED

BOMBAY BICYCLE CLUB > NEW ALBUM > OUT NOW

VICTORIA PARK
LONDON E3












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VICTORIA PARK
LONDON E3

BANK HOLIDAY

SUN 24 MAY

x**Massive** Attack //

SPECIAL GUEST

THOM YORKE

ACOUSTIC SOLO PERFORMANCE

NILS FRAHM

YOUNG FATHERS

NENEH CHERRY

SEVDALIZA

FATOUMATA DIAWARA

TNGHT

ALFA MIST

GAIKA

JACQUES GREENE

SKINNY PELEMBE

HOTEL LUX

MAD PROFESSOR

DUBS 'MEZZANINE' LIVE

+ MANY MORE TO BE ANNOUNCED



AMERICAN EXPRESS



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Gazette

Advertiser



JUST ANNOUNCED

Thom Yorke is playing solo at All Points East

WELL, THIS IS a humdinger. Thom Yorke has been announced as the sub-headliner for Massive Attack's day at All Points East. And not Yorke backed by Radiohead, nor his usual flashy setup. Just him, solo at sundown, with a guitar and a piano, and maybe a theremin if he's in the mood.

So, a big coup for APE. And it makes sense. You couldn't hope for a more appropriate complement to Massive Attack's dour, vaguely danceable doom. Yorke and Robert Del Naja have worked together on a film score, supported Extinction Rebellion and been de facto leaders of the left-leaning, dub-friendly electronic-rock movement for the last 30-odd years. If Massive Attack need to operate under cloak of darkness to wring the best out of their visuals, then Yorke is the perfect person to bid farewell to the last bits of sunlight and optimism.

He's got form for this kind of outlier gig, too. Some might remember a similar bonus addition being made to Latitude Festival 2009. Back then, a bleary Sunday lunchtime crowd got a smattering of tunes from his solo debut, 'The Eraser', but mostly stripped-back Radiohead bits, including a deep cut called 'True Love Waits'. Now, he's got 2014's glitchy 'Tomorrow's Modern Boxes' and last year's pastoral 'Anima' under his belt, as well as a horror soundtrack for 'Suspiria'. He also once popped into an Oxford neighbour's garden to do an impromptu acoustic gig in 2016. So Victoria Park will be a cinch.

Over time, his hair has grown scruffier, beard scaggier, voice craggier. But pretty much all his predictions of lurching autocracy, digital control and climate apocalyptica have come to pass. Which makes his solo outing at All Points East not just rare, but a fun chance to hear from the world's première oracle about the next crises to befall humanity. And, if we're lucky, we may get 'Reckoner' as an encore too. ■ *Gabriel Szatan*

→ Thom Yorke plays All Points East on May 24.



BRYAN FERRY



March

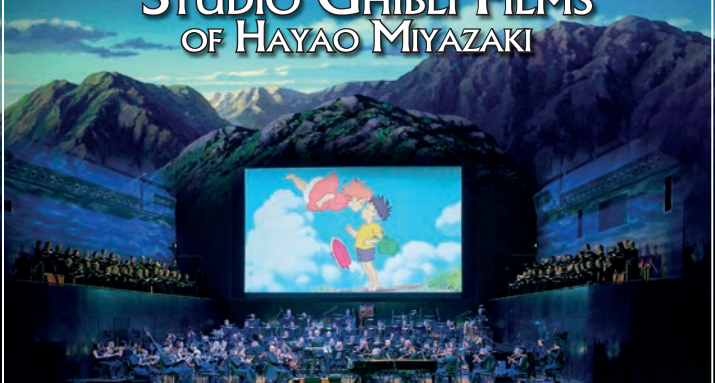
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Theatre & Dance

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TIME OUT MEETS

Brian Cox

How do you follow up a Golden Globe win? If you're this man, you direct a fringe play in west London. Portrait *Jack Latimer*

FRESH FROM HIS Golden Globe triumph for playing tyrannical patriarch Logan Roy in 'Succession', Brian Cox has shifted gear: he's directing 'Sinners - The English Professor', a fringe production of a play by Israeli writer Joshua Sobol.

Hi, Brian! How did you come to do this play?

'I was drawn to it. The writer has had a lot of difficulties in his own country. I felt a sort of kinship with him. The play is really to do with the historic debasement of women.'

A very topical subject.

'I think it's gone on long enough. Women have shown themselves more capable than men. The white man is reaching his sell-by date.'

How did your own stage career start?

'When I walked into Dundee Rep for the first time, to interview for the job of errand boy, no one judged me. I remember there was an actor and a stage director having a fight, a literal

fight, with all hell breaking loose. It was ten o'clock in the morning and they were both drunk. There was this other guy standing on the landing, smoking, and he saw me and said "You all right, darling?"'

How did that make you feel?

'Nobody had ever called me darling before in my life! It was so welcoming. He didn't know who I was or where I came from. He did not care. That's what the theatre means. That's what it represents.'

You played Hannibal Lecter. Do you think there are similarities between him and Logan Roy?

'There are certain similarities. It's psychopathic behaviour. And it's to do with belief. The belief in your own infallibility, like the Pope. Last year I met Michael Bloomberg, he was very nice, and we spoke about Vietnam. He told me that if he'd gone, he wouldn't have been an ordinary soldier. He said "Of course, I'd have been a lieutenant." I didn't challenge him; I thought that said enough.'

Has your life changed at all, now that you've basically become a household name?

'It is just work. People think television is all red carpets, beer and skittles. It isn't. Red carpets... quite frankly, I find it embarrassing. But you have to do it. Going through 117 photographers saying "Over here, Brian. This way, Brian!" Like a performing fucking monkey. It doesn't appeal to me at all.'

You starred with Steven Seagal in 'The Glimmer Man'. Do you have any good anecdotes?

'Well, Steven is, uh... well, ostensibly, Steven is ridiculous.'

Go on...

'In the days before mobiles, he would have a landline telephone with him at all times, even when he ate lunch. I remember thinking: Steven, just eat your lunch.'





'The white man is reaching his sell-by date'

It's good to have you back in London. 'I have such a strong feeling about London because it's the first place I experienced true freedom. I will always love it.' ■

→ 'Sinners' is at the Playground Theatre.
⊖ Latimer Rd. Until Mar 14. £21.50.



By Joe Mackertich
Who has an odd obsession with Steven Seagal.

PRINCE OF EGYPT AND I THINK WE ARE ALONE: TRISTRAM KENTON

The Prince of Egypt



WHAT IS IT...

A stage version of the Biblical epic animation.

WHY GO...

Stephen Schwartz's original songs still soar.

BOOK...

Buy tickets at timeout.com/tickets

→ Dominion Theatre.
⊖ Tottenham Court Rd.
Until Oct 31. £19.50-£145.



'THE PRINCE OF EGYPT' is the plucky, earnest underdog of '90s animated movies: not even a score of Stephen Schwartz bangers could save it from back-of-the-video-cabinet oblivion. Until now? Well, sort of. Schwartz's son Scott brings the story of two Biblical brothers to the stage with dust-raising chaotic energy but not much finesse. Ancient Egyptian-inspired digital projections set the scene with the hokey graininess of retro PlayStation graphics. In front of them, a huge cast acts as both the pyramid-building Hebrews and the underdressed physical theatre incarnation of the story's many ambitious plot points. There's nothing this agile, ragged-bikini-clad crew can't lend a kind of clumpy '90s eroticism to. Sexy chariot race? Check. Sexy burning bush? Check. Sexy river of blood? Check.

Philip LaZebnik's book isn't quite as limber: in one clumsy new scene, Moses woos his wife Tziporah as they watch two sheep rut. Still, its central pair of brothers shine. Luke Brady plays Moses like a gap-yah student who shrugs off his privileged upbringing on a desert voyage of self-discovery. As ruler-to-be Rameses, Liam Tamme has a convincing mercurial streak, switching from brotherly love to anti-Israelite fury. Their voices blend beautifully as their relationship curdles. And the Hebrew slaves' anthem 'Deliver Us' is spine-tingling too, sung straight out to the audience in multi-layered harmony. This show's music is miraculous; if only there was storytelling to match. ■ *Alice Saville*

I Think We Are Alone



WHAT IS IT...

Kathy Burke co-directs this sweet homage to London.

WHY GO...

It's for fans of big-hearted, tear-jerking celebrations of people.

→ Theatre Royal Stratford East. ⊖ Stratford.
Until Mar 21. £10-£38.

IF RICHARD CURTIS had decided to make indie theatre instead of films, his output might well have looked a little like Sally Abbott's 'I Think We Are Alone'. Co-directed by Kathy Burke and Scott Graham, this sweetly sincere – but overly simplistic – play presents a patchwork quilt of London, each square filled with a character.

There's the black mum from Lewisham who's massively proud of her son for getting to Cambridge, but forgets to ask if her dreams make him as happy as they make her. There's the white cabby who recently lost his wife and just wants a passenger who will talk to him. There's the saintly cancer patient. And, finally, there are the two estranged sisters, one working as a chipper hospice nurse and the other as an insomniac HR manager.

But these people never become more than neat archetypes of different walks of life. Instead of watching a collection of complex, indefinable humans, we get a rather one-dimensional 'oh the great melting pot!' approach that never serves the individual characters as well as it could.

And yet... like bloody Richard Curtis, it's hard to dislike. It has a weepy ending, when people die and people fall in love and people make up and people hug for the first time. 'God, what sentimental bollocks,' you mutter, while attending to a very brief allergy attack. Sentimental bollocks which probably – probably – has a heart of gold. ■ *Rosemary Waugh*



NEW SHOWS

THE HOTTEST THEATRE OPENINGS THIS WEEK

WEST END

The Revenger's Tragedy (La Tragedia del Vendicatore) →

Internationally minded adaptors Cheek by Jowl put an Italian spin on Thomas Middleton's bloody drama.
→ Barbican Centre. Wed Mar 4-Sat Mar 7. £16-£45.

Shoe Lady

This enigmatic new play by EV Crowe stars the excellent Katherine Parkinson.
→ Royal Court Theatre.
→ Sloane Square.
Wed Mar 4-Mar 21. £12-£49.



OFF-WEST END

Antigone, Interrupted

A dance interrogation of the Greek myth,

choreographed by Joan Clevillé.
→ The Place. → Euston.
Tue Mar 3-Wed Mar 4.
£17, £13 concs.

Corpse!

Director Clive Brill resurrects a big-in-the-'80s comedy

thriller, which follows an impoverished, murderous thespian.
→ Park Theatre. → Finsbury Park. Wed Mar 4-Mar 28.
£14.50-£18, £13-£16.50 concs.

Daughter

Adam Lazarus's tough solo show about toxic masculinity.
→ Battersea Arts Centre. Clapham Junction Overground.
Tue Mar 3-Mar 28. £12.50-£20.

Drip Drip Drip

NHS staff struggle to deal with a terminally ill bigot in Jon Welch's new satire.
→ Pleasance Theatre.
→ Caledonian Rd. Tue Mar 3-Mar 21. £12-£16, £12-£14 concs.

The Last Five Years

This time-skipping musical by Jason Robert Brown is getting a low-key revival after a West End production in 2016.
→ Southwark Playhouse.
→ Elephant & Castle. Until Mar 28. £27.50, £22 concs.

Lipstick

Two women play gay teenage boys in Lily Shahmoon's debut play about gender and growing up.
→ Southwark Playhouse.
→ Elephant & Castle.
Wed Mar 4-Mar 28.
£14-£28, £14-£22 concs.

The Mikvah Project

Josh Azouz's intimate, stage-flooding story of Jewish ritual bathing and gay romance is back, after a hit 2015 run at The Yard.
→ Orange Tree Theatre.
→ Richmond. Until Mar 28.
£15-£32, £15 concs.

Not Quite Jerusalem

Paul Kember's 1980 comedy follows a bunch of Londoners who swap city life for a kibbutz in Israel.
→ Finborough Theatre. → Earl's Court. Tue Mar 3-Mar 28.
£18-£20, £16-£18 concs.

The Special Relationship

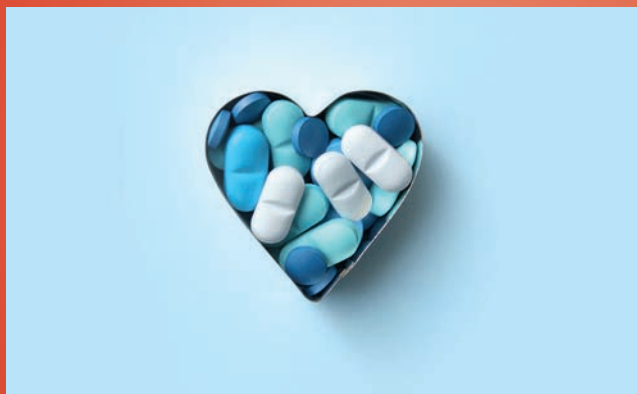
This ironically named play by Hassan Abdulrazzak tells the true stories of Brits deported from the US for minor crimes.
→ Soho Theatre.
→ Tottenham Court Rd. Until Mar 21. £11-£19.50.

Trainers

Sylvan Oswald's ambitious queer love story reimagines French philosopher Michel de Montaigne's sixteenth-century text.
→ Gate Theatre. → Notting Hill Gate. Until Mar 21.
£18, £13-£15 concs.

EXCLUSIVE

'THE EFFECT' AT THE BOULEVARD THEATRE



Award-winning 'Succession' writer Lucy Prebble's famous play returns to London. When Connie and Tristan meet at a clinical trial, they soon start to feel symptoms taking hold – is this real love or just a side effect? Find out from just £18.

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EXCLUSIVE

After being nominated for three Off-West End Awards, Tom Wright's **'Undetectable'** returns to London at the King's Head Theatre. Tickets from £14.

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TOP-SELLING TICKETS

ATTIMEOUT.COM/TICKETS

1 Endgame

Daniel Radcliffe stars in a grimly funny Beckett play.
→ The Old Vic. Until Mar 28.

2 Leopoldstadt

An epic play about Judaism by living legend Tom Stoppard.
→ Wyndham's Theatre. Until Jun 13.

3 9 to 5 the Musical

Dolly Parton's kitschy show is as light as a puff of hairspray.
→ Savoy Theatre. Until May 23.

4 Les Misérables

This rousing French musical will leave you ready to riot.
→ Sondheim Theatre. Until Oct 17.

5 Uncle Vanya

Toby Jones is brilliantly moody in the title role.
→ Harold Pinter Theatre. Until May 2.

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Edited by Eddy Frankel
timeout.com/art @timeoutart

Art & Museums



WHAT IS IT...

A beguiling look at the history of Japan's most iconic garment.

WHY GO...

This is fashion geekery done right.

→ V&A.

↻ South Kensington.

Until Jun 21. £16-£18.

THE V&A DOES an excellent line in fashion exhibitions that are bright, brash, frothy, OTT madness. So it comes as a surprise, initially, to step inside 'Kimono: Kyoto to Catwalk' and absorb a calming scene of cool mint walls, plain white ceiling drapes and a fairly traditional layout of glass exhibition cases.

The first part of the exhibition, which concentrates on the Edo Period (1603-1868), feels committed to being more of a Serious Museum Exhibition than a Big Fashion Blockbuster. But it's a decision that pays off (although it might make the show slightly tricky to digest when crammed with visitors) because it focuses so completely on the complexities of kimonos within Japanese society, providing a parallel fashion narrative to our usual French-centric one.

It also works because the items in those simple glass cases are fascinating and beautiful. From the

flamboyant ruby reds and blazing motifs of a newly minted merchant class to the pared-back (but achingly expensive) minimalism of the elite, the garments on display have the codified strictures of society woven into them as intricately as their embroidery patterns.

SHOW OF THE WEEK

Escaping the folds of time

'Kimono: Kyoto to Catwalk'



The second part, which begins with the relationship between kimono-makers and Dutch traders, before wiggling through Victorian obsessions with Japan and ending with an explosion of modern reinterpretations, is more recognisably a V&A fashion exhibition.

Pre-empting any potential comments about cultural appropriation and exoticising, the V&A has taken a lot of care to critique, for example, the ridiculous images presented in 'The Mikado'. But it's at its most interesting, and persuasive, when it takes Western views out of the picture altogether – like in the first section. Although it's interesting to consider the 'influence' of kimono lines on Western creatives, the best contemporary reinterpretations are by Japanese designers and wearers, maybe because they have a deeper understanding of the garment and its possibilities. The photos of young women mashing up Western, Eastern, modern and historic fashion into kimono-based outfits at the close of the show are characterised by playfulness, joy and creativity – exactly what keeps any fashion truly alive. ■
Rosemary Waugh



Find more shows
to see at
[timeout.com/art](https://www.timeout.com/art)

WHAT IS IT...

Paintings of east London women by Barack Obama's portraitist.

WHY GO...

This is art for everyone.

→ William Morris Gallery.
📍 Walthamstow Central.
Until May 25. Free.

Kehinde Wiley: 'The Yellow Wallpaper'



GOING FROM THE White House to Walthamstow may seem like a step down, but it's a move which makes a lot of sense to American artist Kehinde Wiley. He painted the official portrait of Barack Obama, and now he's painted portraits of women and girls from the streets of Dalston. In both of these endeavours, he's had the same intention: to celebrate, elevate and explore black identity.

The works here are based on a story from the nineteenth century by Charlotte Perkins Gilman about a

woman diagnosed with hysteria and driven mad by the yellow wallpaper in the room she's locked in. That yellow wallpaper courses through these works, twisted into bright re-imaginings of William Morris's designs. Against the lemony, sunny, eye-searing backgrounds stand defiant, stern, fierce women – all real people met on the streets of Dalston. Two hold spear-like poles, one sits with her family. All wear the same unfuckwithable expression.

Yes, these are strong pictures of strong women. But these portraits

are also a process of reclamation and appropriation. By taking these black women and girls from the streets and placing them in the lush, decorative context of British design history, Wiley forces you to think about their cultural context and role in society, about British design, about fashion, about history, about blackness.

Wiley is saying that these people won't be driven crazy by the wallpaper – or the restrictions of an unjust society. They're going to own it and make it theirs.

Look, even if you dislike the paintings, if you find them dull and a little conservative (I definitely don't love them aesthetically), on my visit there were three young black kids with their mums in there, talking about the portraits and sketching them in their notebooks. I go to galleries every single day, and I've never seen young people as engaged or excited about art. Wiley reaching out to people that art often fails to reach out to, and that's a really, really, really good thing. ■
Eddy Frankel

BEST OF THE BEST

The exhibitions you have to see in London right now



Léon Spilliaert

Sad, morose, gothic Belgian paintings from the turn of the century: the perfect show for wallowing in your own misery.

→ Royal Academy of Arts. ⊕ Piccadilly Circus. Until May 25. £14.



Isa Genzken

With this installation of aircraft seats and windows, Genzken proves that she's still the master of punk minimalism.

→ Hasuer & Wirth. ⊕ Oxford Circus. Until May 2. Free.



Steve McQueen

The Turner Prize and Oscar winner's work is full of beauty, but full of pain and injustice too.

It's staggering, powerful, necessary art.
→ Tate Modern. ⊕ Southwark. Until May 11. £13, £12 concls.



'British Surrealism'



AH, SURREALISM. A quick search on Twitter today for 'surreal' brings up posts about coronavirus and Russian cosmetics and someone called Rya saying 'In a few months, I'll be a junior in college. So surreal wow.' 'Surreal' is now part of everyone's vocabulary. So it's strange to think that it was once a super-alooof exercise in cultural one-upmanship practised by a few entitled European blokes in handmade suits. The influence of that original group around André Breton quickly spread. There was a surrealism exhibition in London in 1936, and that is really the crux of this show.

The British take on surrealism is – predictably – awkward. As a style, it's fatally easy to mimic (which wasn't really the original intention). Conroy Maddox is the worst culprit here. He gives us eyeballs, bowler hats and a typewriter with nails sticking out of the keys and a reference to wanking in the title. There's similar tripe from Reuben Mednikoff and Roland Penrose. You feel these artists are just playing with a genre. But away from pastiche, there's some fascinating stuff here. Women artists fare especially well. Maybe surrealism's releveling of the playing field helped back in the day. Eileen Agar and Marion Adnams both have a distinctly feminised approach, while Grace Pailthorpe's

watercolour 'Abstract with Eye and Breast' (1938) strives towards expressionism. Some of that delicacy is found in the work of John Banting, too.

What really works well, though, is the context the show gives to some twentieth-century legends: Paul Nash, Henry Moore and Francis Bacon. Bacon wasn't accepted into the 1936 show, because he was 'not sufficiently surreal'. He was probably well out of it. His work from the year before, 'Figures in a Garden', nods to the surreal with its odd oxblood dog-slug-hedgehog and childlike background, but frothing within it is the dysmorphic horror show he will unleash a decade later. If he'd been accepted as one of the gang, it could have been very different.

Lucian Freud (also represented here) thought that surrealism allowed 'people of no talent to practise art'. On this evidence, he's sort of right. But as a movement, it helped blow apart the whole idea of artistic 'talent' as traditionally conceived. And in that respect, he was dead wrong. ■ *Chris Waywell*

WHAT IS IT...

A uniquely British look at the twentieth century's biggest art movement.

WHY GO...

Who needs reality when you've got surrealism.

→ Dulwich Picture Gallery. West Dulwich rail. Until May 17. £16.50, £8 concls.

THE COLOUQUIN, THE PINE FAMILY, 1940, PHOTO, THE ISRAEL MUSEUM, JERUSALEM. © SAMARTANS, SPIRE HEATHMORE, AND BY KIND PERMISSION OF THE HOUSE OF BARTENHEW SOCIETY. ISA GENZKEN © ISA GENZKEN. LICENSED BY ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK. COURTESY THE ARTIST; HANSEN AND GALENIECHOLZ COLONIE / BEBLIV / NEW YORK. PHOTO BY TODD WHITE. LEON SPILLIAERT © STUDIO PHILIPPE DE FORMANOR. STEVE MCQUEEN © STEVE MCQUEEN. COURTESY THE ARTIST; THOMAS DANIE GALLERY AND MARRIAN GOODMAN GALLERY.

Food

Edited by Tania Ballantine
timeout.com/eatdrink @timeouteatdrink

FIVE OF THE BEST

Afternoon teas

Stumped for a Mother's Day pressie? Give her a voucher (make your own if you have to) for one of these teas. Bring on the brownie points

The vegan one

From Eric Laniard's **Cake Boy** – the celebrated London patisserie and cookery school – this plant-based tea offers a glamorous selection of savoury and sweet comestibles. Expect the likes of buckwheat petit pain with rocket, cheddar-style cheese, sun-blushed tomato and basil, or a gorgeous avocado and Peruvian chocolate cup layered with raspberry compote. There's a with-dairy-and-eggs 'modern twist' version, too.

→ Battersea Reach, Juniper Drive, SW18 1TX. £45, including a glass of vegan champagne.

The one for celeb-spotting

Flattering lighting, the smell of fresh roses, classical musicians in the corner: the Foyer at **Claridge's** is a class act. This elegant art deco space is where chic A-listers come to take tea. The pastries are decent, the just-baked scones even better (look out for the sensational Marco Polo 'tea jelly'), but at Claridge's, the savouries are the real stars. Not only are the finger

sandwiches moist, full-flavoured and unlimited, but there's an ever-changing special – perhaps peppered goat's cheese with pumpkin and sage jalousie.

→ Brook St, W1K 4HR £70, £80 with a glass of Laurent-Perrier champagne.

The glamorous one

Head to the **Corinthia** hotel's light-filled Crystal Moon Lounge if you want to sample afternoon tea amid the comforting glow of 1,001 baccarat crystals. The generous spread includes an assortment of excellent finger sandwiches (truffle egg mayo, tandoori chicken with green apple, that sort of thing) plus scones and sweet-toothed delicacies such as pear and cinnamon éclairs. Tea drinkers will find a fascinating line-up of bespoke blends and single-estate sips – but don't miss the Corinthia's indulgent hot

chocolate, served in a pot with marshmallows, whipped cream and teeny chocolate splinters.

→ Whitehall Place, SW1A 2BD £55, £65 with a glass of champagne.

The one fit for a princess

Served in the gilded lounge of the regal **Goring** hotel (famous for being the place where K-Middy spent her last night as a commoner), this is the Grace Kelly of afternoon teas. 'Smart casual' is the official line outfit-wise, but this is a spread you'll want to get dressed up for. The sandwiches, in particular, are faultless: perfect little crustless soldiers made fresh to order. Warm, freshly-baked scones are as classic as they come, but the pastry chef has had fun with the cakes: there's giant macaron

and a blood-orange mousse dome that looks a little bit like a Disney toadstool.

→ 15 Beeston Place, SW1W 0JW. £50, £62 with a glass of Bollinger Special Cuvée.

EDITOR'S PICK

The all-rounder

Tea at **The Lanesborough** ticks all the boxes. Served in the elegant Céleste restaurant or the hotel's sumptuous 'Withdrawing Room', its 'Back to Classic' offer is an occasion to be treasured. Soft, fluffy sandwiches are in the ultra-traditional mould of coronation chicken, smoked salmon with cream cheese or even cheddar and pickle, while the patisserie selection spans everything from battenberg cake to lingonberry religieuse. Everything else is done with bags of confidence, from the fresh warm scones to the carefully chosen – but not excessively long – tea list. Until June 2020, there's also a menu from patisserie diva Peggy Porschen. ■

→ Hyde Park Corner, SW1X 7TA. £49, £62 with a glass of champagne.



The Lanesborough



Claridge's

Kolamba



BY ANYONE'S STANDARDS, it's pretty punchy for a South Asian restaurant to open next door to a Dishoom. 'But Kolamba is Sri Lankan!' I hear you all cry, which is totally different! Well yes, but not everyone is as enlightened as you: many will see both as fashionable spice houses, one and the same.

Truthfully though, Kolamba is a very different beast. Smaller and more sophisticated, this is not somewhere to come with a riotous gang of pals, but one carefully curated friend. Or a hot date.

From the kitchen, there were flashes of brilliance. Sri Lankan signatures were the strongest, like fish cutlets – aka spiced mini fishcakes with deep-fried coats – that were good enough to rival my dad's (which are legendary). Also: the patties, aka fiery mini pasties, and the monkfish curry, its thin coconut sauce laced with tamarind, cloves and cinnamon (though take note: the fish was on the firm side,



the way a home cook would make it, rather than a chef). Best of all: the creamy and comforting cucumber curry. You Must Get This. (At £5.90, it's also a steal.) Hoppers were decent, string hoppers – that rarest of steamed delights – even better.

But there were slip-ups too, like over-salting the tomato sambol, or heavy-handedness with the jaggery (a dark, molasses-like concentrated sugar) in a beef curry (a pity, as the

meat was beautifully tender). But Kolamba is so atmospheric, so stylish – all concrete floors, stone tables and a mashup of oversized designer lampshades and sweet tea lights – it's hard to believe this is a husband-and-wife's first crack at running a restaurant. I can't wait to see what they do next. ■

Tania Ballantine
Dinner for two with drinks and service: around £95.

WHAT IS IT...
 A modern Sri Lankan restaurant in Soho.

WHY GO...
 The cucumber curry. The humble cuke has never had it so good.

→ 21 Kingly St, W1B 5QA.
 ↻ Oxford Circus.

EXCLUSIVE

Get two cocktails and unlimited food at **The Courtyard**. Just £10.

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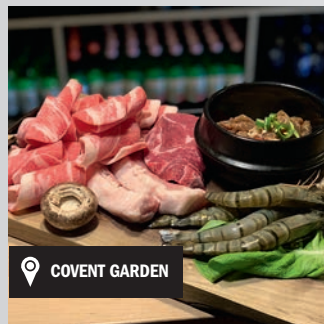


ISLINGTON

MESON CALLEJON SAYS:

'From tapas to paella, Chef Pepe brings passion and home-style cooking from Murcia in south-eastern Spain. Call ahead and order the delicious arroz a banda, creamy rice cooked with fish and served with aioli, or try a Spanish speciality dessert and some delicious Spanish wine.'

137 Upper St, N1 1QP



COVENT GARDEN

YORI SAYS:

'Yori is an authentic Korean BBQ restaurant offering time-honoured dishes like beef bulgogi and pork belly, grilled right in front of your eyes. Our food is not only cherished by our customers, but Korean celebs including 'Parasite' actor Song Kang-ho and its Oscar-winning director Boon Jong-ho.'

15 Catherine St, WC2B 5JZ.

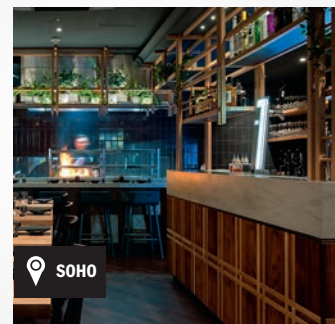


SOUTH BANK

LYANESS SAYS:

'To celebrate the London Eye's twentieth birthday, we're teaming up with Beefeater Gin to take over a pod serving fancy tea. Tickets are limited. If you miss out, you can enjoy the tea at Lyaness, including two bespoke cocktails. Get 10 percent off by quoting BeefeaterxLyaness when booking.'

20 Upper Ground, SE1 9PD.



SOHO

ROBATA SAYS:

'Robata, meaning "fireside", specialises in the long-standing tradition of Japanese charcoal cooking. Bringing the flavours of Japan to the heart of London, we create a unique experience where Asian flair meets twenty-first-century creativity. Enjoy sake cocktails, sharing plates and our famed robata skewers.'

56 Old Compton St, W1D 4UE.

Moncks



WHAT IS IT...

A European brasserie from the team behind Park Chinois.

WHY GO...

For a classic burger in a handsome space.

→ 33 Dover St, W1S 4NF.

📍 Green Park.

NAMED AFTER THE seventeenth-century lord Christopher Monck, this European brasserie is housed on his former Clarendon Estate, which later became Dover, Albemarle and Bond Streets. More noteworthy is that it's from the team behind Park Chinois, the glam spot originally launched by Alan Yau. What's also fun is that there's a steep stairway that connects the two venues through the cloakroom (our waiter gleefully showed us). And while its interiors are different to those of its Cantonese cousin, they're no less swish: all marble, oxblood-red leather accents, pleated William Morris-style wallpaper skirting the ceiling and bold, modernist prints on the walls.

Food-wise, expect an unthreatening selection of brasserie classics. The butcher's burger with sweet-sour caramelised onion relish ticked all the boxes, while the steak tartare was brilliantly textured, if a little under seasoned. It was a pity that the rosemary chips were chronically oversalted and lacking the promised herbs.

Veg-based dishes provided some salvation: truffled asparagus had a tangy mustard dressing and buttered spinach was, well, buttery. The kitchen struggled to match the splendour of the interiors, but I'd happily return, if only to be treated like the Mayfair local I'm not. ■ *Megan Carnegie*

Dinner for two with drinks and service: around £130.



Bloomsbury Street Kitchen



THE BIG SMOKE'S fifth outpost under The Kitchens group, Bloomsbury Street Kitchen is all about Japanese and Mediterranean small plates. The fusion kind? Nah, it's just two separate menus. On paper, that looks pretty peculiar. But oddly enough, the concept delivers.

A starter of battered aubergine and courgette chips was the first indicator of BSK's mostly high standards. They arrived crisp, not too greasy, and liberally sprinkled with chilli salt. Perfect, then, for dunking into the cooling tzatziki dip that came with them. Next, out came some Japanese flat tacos, topped with lush ponzu mayo (a citrus-based sauce) and elegant slices of raw tuna, plus a kick of truffle.

The beef tataki was perfection. Each thin, lightly seared, slightly pink-middled slice came adorned with spring onions and garlic crisps. It got better: two gyros arrived filled with lamb shoulder, a lemon-feta yoghurt and fries. Wrapped in paper and playfully tied together with string, they were a late night takeaway-inspired bit of genius.

Desserts were fun, too. A coconut meringue mousse was dotted with splotches of potent white rum jelly, accompanied by a tangy pineapple sorbet. Like a deconstructed piña colada,

yes. Another big plus point: staff here are friendly, polished, and care about your dietary needs.

There were a couple of niggles, though. Portions are somewhat petite for the price (although this is possibly to be expected for a small-plates menu in a smart restaurant).

Also, the slow-cooked lamb in the gyros could have been more tender, and the seasoning needed to be revved right up: we were left craving the sticky glaze that the menu promised. But sticky glaze or not, Bloomsbury Street Kitchen is a very nice surprise. ■ *Ella Braidwood*

Dinner for two with drinks and service: around £115.

WHAT IS IT...

A Japanese-Mediterranean small-plates restaurant in Bloomsbury.

WHY GO...

For those lamb gyros. Late-night kebabs at their best.

→ 9-13 Bloomsbury St, WC1B 3QD. 📍 Tottenham Court Rd.

EXCLUSIVE

BRUNCH AND BOTTOMLESS DRINKS AT YUU KITCHEN



Bao buns and bottomless booze are a great combo – the pillowy goodness soaks up the suds perfectly. Now you can get both, as well as a small plate and a pud, for half the normal price, how bao that?

TIMEOUT.COM/YUUBRUNCH



Ts&Cs apply.

Drink

Edited by **Laura Richards**
timeout.com/bars @timeouteatdrink

BAR OF THE WEEK



WHAT IS IT...
Zero-waste drinking underneath Neil Rankin's vegan burger joint.

WHY GO...
To see that parsnips genuinely do belong with booze.

→ Basement, 202 Brick Lane, E1 6SA. Shoreditch High St Overground.

Tincture



THE WHOLE SPEAKEASY thing doesn't work if, once you pull back the door, the bar behind it isn't buzzing. And it was *really* quiet when I visited Tincture. It's below a vegan restaurant and is also predominantly plant-based – and right now, there's a bit of a correlation between veganism and teetotalism. And while there are as many alcohol-free cocktails on the menu as there are boozy ones, you wouldn't picture that from a bar modelled on the Prohibition era's hedonism. The reality is that it's a great hangout, on or off the wagon.

Chiming in with the planet-saving plant-based ethos, there was no refit when the basement bar space was acquired. Instead, it's chosen to recycle the art deco-leaning interior. Luckily, it's a lovely bar – if a little fifty shades of brown.

Seasonal, zero-waste cocktails are named after the foodstuff that makes them, and while five a day

might be a bit much, we polished off a few of these sinkable bevies pretty swiftly. Favourites included Pears, a kombucha-filled number with shavings of parmesan on the side, and Nips, a curiously earthy combination of apple, bitters and rum infused with roasted parsnips, which came with root veg crisps. Powering the alcohol-free stuff is an

in-house creation called 'crossip', which our engaging bartender described as like a Lucozade sachet. It was a bit of an acquired taste in the Sazerac – a boozeless drink which tasted smoky, like a mezcal cocktail. But credit to its creators, it's always nice to find new, interesting things to drink when off the booze. ■
Laura Richards

OPENING SOON



El Rincón

Crown & Castle

Dalston's Diner is no more – the site's returning to its former glory as a public house. Thirsty east Londoners can expect an array of beers, with the pub still a part of the family that owns hop haven the Well & Bucket, among others.
→ 600 Kingsland Rd, E8 4AH.
Dalston Junction Overground.

El Rincón

A wine and tapas joint is set to join the fleet of Spanish bars in a nook of King's Cross. Next door to sherry bar Pepito and across from restaurant Camino, El Rincón's niche will be Spanish wine and sangria on tap. *Olé!*
→ The Regent Quarter, Varnishers Yard, N1 9FD.
⊖ King's Cross.

Sweetwater

While live music venue Lafayette and food hall The Courtyard are a lot to get excited about at the new Goods Way in King's Cross, there's also a bar lying in wait. Sweetwater is said to channel 'the vibrancy of New Orleans' – a bold claim indeed.
→ 11 Goods Way, N1C 4DP.
⊖ King's Cross.

DRINK THIS

Rags to Riches



It feels good to raise a glass to Madame Clicquot ahead of International Women's Day. The 'Grande Dame of Champagne' made a bubbly empire from the wine company she inherited after her husband died when she was just 27. If you can't afford a bottle of the good stuff, TT Liquor is mixing fizz with melonade (melon liqueur) to make a sprightly cocktail in her name on its new 'genius'-honouring menu. Get inspired while you sip.
→ 17b Kingsland Rd, E2 8AA.
Hoxton Overground. £12.50.

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timeout.com/bars

Escapes

Edited by Ellie Walker-Arnott
timeout.com/daytrips



A weekend in

Blakeney

Remote walks, seal-spotting ops and huge horizons

FEELING A BIT hemmed in? Open wide for a big dose of Blakeney. This village on the North Norfolk coast is part of the Blakeney National Nature Reserve, where the sea's been left to its own devices and the landscape has a mind of its own. Find vast tidal mudflats, shingle, sand and salt marshes. Marvel at Norfolk's signature oversized skies, spot birds and seals, then hunker down in a cosy quayside pub.

Eat this

Seafood is Blakeney's soul food. Grab a crab sandwich from **Willie Weston's Fish Shop** at Morston Quay in the warm months, or pick one up year-round from its village shop and eat it on the quayside. Shellfish is a staple at **The Moorings**, which serves a first-rate Sunday roast, too.

Walk this

Pick up the footpath from Blakeney Quay car park and you can follow the three-mile, wildlife-filled loop around **Blakeney Freshes**. On the way back, refuel at **Wiveton Hall Café**. It's a popular spot so visit before midday to beat the crowds.

Drink this

A stone's throw from the quay, locals' favourite **The Kings Arms** is a centuries-old inn with all the charm of a proper coastal boozer – not to mention pub grub that comes in massive portions. Another good shout for drinks is **The White Horse**, a classy gastropub that's right by the harbour.

Discover this

Go birdwatching along **Blakeney Point's** seaside trail – you can walk all the way from Cley Beach to the Lifeboat House as great flocks of golden plover fly overhead. Kids (and big kids) can go **crabbing** on The Quay – pick up a line, bucket and bait from the Spar.

Buy this

Retail therapy plays second fiddle to the scenery here. That said, **The Anchor Shop** stocks seaside-themed trinkets and gifts, **Blakeney Delicatessen** sells edible take-homes, and there's a decent **antiques** centre over in Wells-Next-the-Sea, an ace three-hour walk away along the Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path. ■ *Katie Gregory*

IF YOU ONLY DO ONE THING

Take a **seal-spotting trip** from Morston or Blakeney Quay. More than 3,000 pups call Blakeney Point home (it's the country's biggest seal colony) and winter is breeding season, so you might just spot a newborn. Boats set off once a day at high tide in winter, and the whole experience takes about an hour.

WAKE UP HERE

Wiveton Hall



Bed down for the night in the grounds of this seventeenth-century hall just outside Blakeney on the edge of the marshes. You can make the most of your rural location by sleeping (almost) out in the elements – no standard two-man for you, we're talking a cotton bell tent with proper beds – or kip in one of the flint-faced Jacobean manor house's rustic cottages that come with country-chic interiors. It's all right on the edge of the sea, with direct access to the coastal path and a seasonal café and PYO fruit farm on site.

So wholesome it hurts. ■

Ellie Walker-Arnott

→ Blakeney, Norfolk. From £95 a night.
www.wivetonhall.co.uk

→ Get there: three hours 20 minutes by train from London Liverpool St to Sheringham, then bus or taxi; around two hours 45 minutes by car.

Find more wide-open spaces at timeout.com/daytrips

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So, you probably wouldn't
know that most drinkers
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