

Clockwise from top left: A chef at The Modern Pantry; pickled vegetables at Grain Store; the Corner Room restaurant; chicken pad thai at Busaba Eathai. Opposite: High tea at The Modern Pantry

PHOTOGRAPHS: LISA LINDER; SHUTTERSTOCK

# LONDON



## 50 best meals

From the most decadent high tea to some of the best Asian food in the world, Rachel Smith picks the UK capital's unmissable restaurants



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### 1 The Traditional Afternoon Tea at The Ritz London

150 Piccadilly, Green Park ([www.theritzlondon.com](http://www.theritzlondon.com)) ££

The Traditional Afternoon Tea (£45 or ₹4,560 per person) served here is the ultimate indulgence. Steeped in old-world elegance, the tea is served in The Palm Court—amid birdcage chandeliers, beneath the gold trellis ceiling and always with the tinkling of piano music in the background. There are 17 loose-leaf teas on offer and optional Champagne to accompany finger sandwiches, pastries and oven-warm scones. Be sure to book in advance, and also to check the dress code before going—it's jackets and ties for men, and formal wear for women.

### 2 Cream tea at The Wolseley

160 Piccadilly, Green Park ([www.thewolseley.com](http://www.thewolseley.com)) £

The English institution of cream tea is a more manageable option than full afternoon tea. The Wolseley, just next door to The Ritz, does a good version with warm scones, thick cream and plenty of jam (£10.75 or ₹1,090 per person). The Wolseley Champagne Tea (£33.50 or ₹3,390 per person) is a more celebratory version. The elegant café-restaurant, where tea is served, is also renowned for its breakfasts—offering British classics such as kedgeree, kipper and haggis, as well as somewhat easier-to-stomach options such as fresh fruit salad and granola.

### 3 A fashionista's afternoon tea at The Berkeley

Wilton Place, Knightsbridge ([www.the-berkeley.co.uk](http://www.the-berkeley.co.uk)) ££

Located in the heart of Knightsbridge, its afternoon tea is inspired by many of the high-end fashion boutiques on its doorstep. Its Prêt-à-Portea service (£49 or ₹5,000 per person) includes ginger biscuits decorated like Burberry's signature Prorsum trench coats and Victoria sponges transformed into Saint Laurent's essential autumn red Classic Duffle 6 handbag. The menu changes every six months to ensure it keeps up with the season's latest trends.



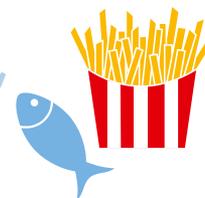
**Clockwise from above:** The fashionista's afternoon tea at The Berkeley; a diner at E Pellicci; The Ritz London. **Opposite:** The Traditional Afternoon Tea at The Ritz London

### 4 Modern tea at The Modern Pantry

47-48 St John's Square, Clerkenwell ([www.themodernpantry.co.uk](http://www.themodernpantry.co.uk)) £

Chef Anna Hansen puts a modern twist on afternoon tea, taking inspiration from more exotic world ingredients. Expect scones laced with matcha; and lemon possets flavoured with yuzu juice and poured from Chinese earthenware teapots. Afternoon tea (£17 or ₹1,730 per person) is by reservation only, so book in advance.

Traditional English



### 5 Game, pies and puddings at Rules

35 Maiden Lane, Covent Garden ([www.rules.co.uk](http://www.rules.co.uk)) ££

Holding claim to the oldest restaurant in London, Rules is something of an institution. It specialises in British game and traditional pies and puddings, served among the gild-framed oil paintings and wall-mounted antlers in the old-world dining room. For those with a strong constitution and an appreciation of British gastronomic history, the wild rabbit hotpot or roast crown of pheasant is a must.





PHOTOGRAPHS: JONATHAN GREGSON; LISS LINDER; SHUTTERSTOCK



### 6 Traditional tucker at The Fish and Chip Shop

189 Upper Street, Islington ([www.thefishandchipshop.uk.com](http://www.thefishandchipshop.uk.com)) £

A 'chippie' is an essential part of many a British high street. It's not always the most glamorous destination, but this beautiful, blue-fronted Islington fish-and-chip shop is a step up from most. Go for battered or breaded fish to take out or eat in. And, of course, a portion of fresh-cut chips, wrapped in paper, and served with salt and lashings of vinegar.

### 7 Gastropub food at The Zetter Townhouse

49-50 St John's Square, Clerkenwell ([www.thezettertownhouse.com](http://www.thezettertownhouse.com)) ££

Enjoy nibbles and cocktails in traditional Victorian surroundings at The Zetter Townhouse. The boutique hotel has modelled its pub on a great aunt's drawing room. The eclectic furnishings include Persian rugs, taxidermy, oil portraits, crystals and candelabras. Sink into a deep armchair, and savour one of their award-winning cocktails. Dishes include favourites such as Scotch egg with curry mayonnaise and herring roe on toast. After a gimlet or two, it's hard to drag yourself back into the 21st century.

### 8 A morning fry-up at E Pellicci

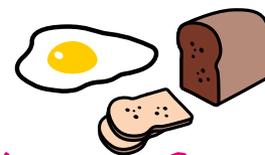
332 Bethnal Green Road, Bethnal Green (+44 20 7739 4873) £

This traditional East End café was founded in 1900 by Italian immigrant,



**Clockwise from top left:** The cocktail lounge at The Zetter Townhouse; a morning fry-up at E Pellicci; E Pellicci café. **Opposite:** A radish and black sesame dish at The Clove Club

Priamo Pellicci, who quickly mastered the art of a traditional 'greasy spoon' breakfast: eggs, bacon, beans, toast, tomatoes, mushrooms and a mug of builders' tea—the full works. An authentic British fry-up might be an acquired taste, but the service will charm anyone. Still in the Pellicci family, the staff is keen to strike up conversation, sit down for a chat, right the world and boast about 'mama's cooking', keeping customers coming back to this East End gem and again.



## Modern British

### 9 Michelin-standard meal at the Corner Room

Upstairs, Town Hall Hotel, Patriot Square, Bethnal Green (<http://townhallhotel.com>) ££

Nuno Mendes shot to fame with his Michelin-starred restaurant, Viajante, located on the ground floor of the Town Hall Hotel. Just upstairs is the lesser-known Corner Room. Also run by Mendes, this low-key, neighbourhood restaurant serves similar dishes: light and fresh, with sharp, clean flavours. Corner Room is casual—there are fewer courses of well-portioned food, unlike Viajante's lengthy taster menu. Go for lunch, when you can make a reservation (you can't in the evening), and try the set lunch for Michelin-standard food at extraordinary prices.

### 10 New-age English at The Clove Club GOOD FOR VEG

Shoreditch Town Hall, 380 Old Street (<http://thecloveclub.com>) ££

Spearheading new-age British cuisine, chef Isaac McHale has developed a five-course menu, which stars fresh, native ingredients—from heritage tomatoes to golden turnips, Yorkshire grouse and blackcurrant-leaf ice cream, with a beautiful vegetarian menu available. Pick from starters including globe artichoke with sheep's milk and green olive, and mains such as runner beans, sunflower and mint.

### 11 After-party eats at Duck & Waffle

Heron Tower, 110 Bishopgate (<http://duckandwaffle.com>) £

Duck & Waffle is a recent addition to London's dining scene. It's located on the 40th floor of the Heron Tower, and has wrap-around windows offering stunning views across London. Chef Daniel Doherty's team serves food around the clock, rustling up late-night snacks for exhausted executives (and the post-party crowd), breakfasts for early risers and everything in between. The relaxed licence means that it's good for a whisky sour any hour of the day. Sip while the sun sets or as it rises. Its signature dish is a duck leg with fried duck egg, waffle and a small pot of mustard maple syrup.



## 12 Exciting vegetarian dishes at Grain Store GOOD FOR VEG

Granary Square, 1-3 Stable Street, King's Cross ([www.grainstore.com](http://www.grainstore.com)) ££

When Bruno Loubet launched Grain Store, he strove to make vegetables the stars of his dishes. The emphasis is on colourful, textured and tasty plates—occasionally enhanced with a little fish or meat—but always ensuring the dish is rooted in its vegetables. With delights such as braised cauliflower, smoked beetroot, pickled onions and lovage pesto, even the most carnivorous eater may find himself being gently converted to vegetarianism.



Chefs at Grain Store





## Shops and markets

### 13 High-end groceries at Fortnum & Mason

181 Piccadilly, Piccadilly Circus  
([www.fortnumandmason.com](http://www.fortnumandmason.com)) ££

Established in 1707, Fortnum & Mason has a rich history: it supplied the British Army with dried fruits and preserves during the Napoleonic Wars; it was the first stockist of British staple, Heinz baked beans; and it even supplied the 1922 Everest expedition with 60 tins of quail in foie gras and four dozen bottles of Champagne. Now, Fortnum & Mason is most renowned for its extravagant hampers, high-end groceries and tail-coated staff. It's a joy to browse and a pleasure to purchase. Also head to The Fountain Restaurant and savour specials such as the Welsh rarebit or opt for the set menu, which walks you through the house specials.

### 14 Artisanal foodstuff at Maltby Street Market

The Ropewalk, 41 Maltby Street, Bermondsey ([www.maltby.st](http://www.maltby.st)) £

The guidebooks will direct you to Borough Market—but any London foodie will tell you that it's overpriced and heaving with tourists. Those in the know go a little further down the road, where artisanal food producers—chefs, baristas and brewers—gather under the railway arches every



Sunday to sell their wares. Indulge in London-smoked salmon by Hansen & Lydersen, Spanish jamón at Tozino and a Bloody Mary from Little Bird Gin.

### 15 Speciality ingredients at Harrods

87-135 Brompton Road, Knightsbridge  
([www.harrods.com](http://www.harrods.com)) ££

Harrods was founded by a grocer and tea merchant back in 1849. Staying true to its roots, the opulent food hall remains a big part of the 10 lakh sq ft store. It stocks everything from the world's most expensive tea to whiskies worth tens of thousands of pounds per bottle. The food hall houses an oyster bar, tea room and ice cream parlour as well as shelves and shelves of food available for purchase—everything from biscuit tins and coffee blends to preserves and pickles.

**Maltby Street Market.** Left, from top: The Hansen & Lydersen smoked salmon stall at Maltby Street Market; a shopper at Harrods



PHOTOGRAPHS: LISA LINDER;  
GETTY, SHUTTERSTOCK



## *Fine-dining and celebrity chefs*

### **16 Vegetarian taster menu at Alyn Williams at The Westbury** GOOD FOR VEG

**The Westbury Hotel, 37 Conduit Street, Mayfair (www.alynwilliams.com) ££**

Williams' smart hotel restaurant has a specific vegetarian à la carte menu, and, unusually, a vegetarian taster menu, too. Dishes are perfectly constructed—from a smoked egg with truffle to a Jerusalem artichoke panna cotta with orange Chantilly and cardamom.

### **17 Delicate dishes at Pollen Street Social**

**8-10 Pollen Street, Mayfair (www.pollenstreetsocial.com) ££**

Jason Atherton's flagship restaurant was awarded a Michelin star within one year of opening in 2011. Expect well-executed, delicate dishes from pea velouté to smoked aubergine caviar and peanut parfait. Flag down the gin trolley to try Pollen Street Social's signature cocktails, mixed at your table.

### **18 Set lunch at Dabbous**

**39 Whitfield Street (http://dabbous.co.uk) ££**

"Every single dish, every plate made with such finesse, such a careful balance of flavour and texture," gushed AA Gill, London's harshest food critic, as he reviewed Oliver Dabbous' cooking at his debut restaurant. It's difficult to get a booking, but the best odds are with a lunchtime reservation, when last-minute dropouts mean that tables often become available for the set-lunch menu.

### **19 The tasting menu at The Ledbury**

GOOD FOR VEG

**127 Ledbury Road, Notting Hill (www.theledbury.com) ££**

This two Michelin-starred restaurant is all you could wish for from a fine-dining experience: beautifully constructed dishes and flawless service. Dining at The Ledbury is not something that should be rushed. Vegetarians can choose the tasting menu, which offers options such as a salad of green beans with fresh hazelnuts and peach, and a roasted cauliflower-and-sea-vegetable risotto.

### **20 Multi-sensory dining at Dinner by Heston**

**Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park, 66 Knightsbridge (www.dinnerbyheston.com) ££**

The most renowned starter at Dinner is Blumenthal's Meat Fruit—a ball of meat pâté, coated in mandarin jelly and garnished with stalk and leaves, disguising it as an orange. The dishes take you through England's rich gastronomic

past, with each dish on the menu dated according to its year of conception. Finish the meal with Taffety Tart (c1660), served with apple, rose and vanilla ice cream.

### 21 The set menu at Maze by Gordon Ramsay **GOOD FOR VEG**

10-13 Grosvenor Square ([www.gordonramsay.com](http://www.gordonramsay.com)) ££

The Scottish chef might be known for his bad temper but, at Maze, you'll remember that it is the extraordinary food that has made Ramsay a star. There is a set menu, a vegetarian menu and a sushi menu available. Book the 'Kitchen Table', which puts you in the heart of the action—so you can watch the masters at work as you dine.

### 22 Authentic Chinese at China Tang at The Dorchester

53 Park Lane ([www.chinatanglondon.co.uk](http://www.chinatanglondon.co.uk)) ££

China Tang has a manifesto called 'How to Murder a Chinese', where the staff vows not to replicate common mistakes seen in Chinese restaurants: tepid food, rice served on plates, long menus, bad translations and 'chop-suey'. Founder Sir David Tang vowed to stay true to authentic Chinese—and has succeeded, thanks to an extensive dim sum menu, spanning from Shanghai dumplings to traditional taro cakes.

### 23 Haute couture Japanese at Nobu

Metropolitan by COMO, 19 Old Park Lane ([www.noburestaurants.com](http://www.noburestaurants.com)) ££

With 22 locations round the world, Nobu attracts a jet-setting crowd who enjoy the unwavering consistency of Nobu Matsuhisa's food. London's Old Park Lane Nobu is famed for its dishes, ranging from yellowtail tartar with caviar to black cod with miso.

### 24 Fresh seasonal food at Alain Ducasse at The Dorchester

The Dorchester, 53 Park Lane ([www.alainducasse-dorchester.com](http://www.alainducasse-dorchester.com)) £££

Specialising in contemporary French cuisine, Alain Ducasse's restaurant offers à la carte and tasting menus, as well as a special 'menu jardin', which use fresh, seasonal produce. From Tuesday to Friday, the restaurant also hosts a 'Lunch Hour', which whisks diners through three courses, two glasses of wine, coffee or tea in under an hour.

**Below:** Wall décor at China Tang. **Bottom, from left:** Chefs Ashley Palmer-Watts and Heston Blumenthal of Dinner by Heston; custard pie at Dabbous. **Opposite:** Shellfish and caviar at Alain Ducasse at The Dorchester



### European

### 25 Classic Italian at The River Café **GOOD FOR VEG**

Thames Wharf, Rainville Road ([www.rivercafe.co.uk](http://www.rivercafe.co.uk)) ££

Serving traditional Italian food, the Michelin-starred restaurant is famed for its simple but perfectly executed dishes such as a spiced-pumpkin risotto, as well as its critically acclaimed chocolate Nemesis cake. The nurturing restaurant has also been credited with training English chefs such as Jamie Oliver. It isn't in an easily accessible part of town, but it's certainly worth a visit.

### 26 Sunday lunch at Trullo

300-302 St Paul's Road, Islington ([www.trullorestaurant.com](http://www.trullorestaurant.com)) £

Enter Trullo and be engulfed with an air that's thick with the delicious aromas of Italian cooking. The best day to go is Sunday, when the restaurant hosts a traditional Italian lunch. Save both time and space for the antipasti, primi, secondi, contorni, dessert and many helpings of cheese.

### 27 Pizza at Lardo

197-205 Richmond Road, Hackney ([www.lardo.co.uk](http://www.lardo.co.uk)) £

In the corner of this neighbourhood restaurant is a whopping pizza oven, which churns out the crispiest bases—just like 'mama used to make them' back in Napoli. The toppings show culinary flair, with offerings such as Gorgonzola, radicchio and walnuts. Sip a cocktail while you work your way through the antipasti list, ranging from fennel salami to a dish of sour grapes.

### 28 Pre-theatre nibbles at Terroirs

5 William IV Street (<http://terroirswinebar.com>) ££

This wine bar and restaurant has an eye for provenance—from the French cheeses and Italian salamis to a list of carefully sourced wines. The West End destination comes into its own as a pre-theatre destination, where a charcuterie board or perhaps some wine, bread and cheese are the perfect ways to stave off the hunger during a performance.

### 29 Quintessential French at La Petite Maison

53-54 Brook's Mews, Mayfair (<http://lpmlondon.co.uk>) ££

This French restaurant has built up a reputation for turning classic dishes into



works of art. Whether it's a simple Niçoise salad or the pasta dish of the day, you can be sure that the chefs will have transformed the mundane into the magical.

### **30 Tapas at Jose**

**104 Bermondsey Street, Bermondsey**  
**(www.josepizarro.com) £**

This sherry and tapas bar has brought a sunny corner of Spain to this South London street. In accordance with tapas tradition, the plates are small mouthfuls to accompany a glass of wine or sherry—perhaps one or two croquetas each and a slice of Spanish tortilla.

### **31 Modern European at The Ivy**

**1-5 West Street (www.the-ivy.co.uk) £££**

This is the feeding and watering hole of London's movers and shakers. It's bang in the middle of the theatre district, which means the cultural crowd comes flocking. And Hollywood stars have been known to stop by—Nicole Kidman, Tom Cruise, Jack Nicholson have all been seen here. The food is modern European, served with old-school elegance.



## *Hot trends*

### **32 Oysters at J Sheekey**

**28-35 St Martin's Court, Leicester Square**  
**(www.jsheekeyoysterbar.co.uk) ££**

This vintage establishment is perfectly located for enjoying a light supper before hitting the West End. Dressed in smart white aprons and black waistcoats, the staff serves up a host of seafood: razor clams, crab bisque, lemon grass skewered prawns and an extravagant plateau de fruits de mer. But J Sheekey is most famed for its oyster bar, offering a selection from Porthilly Rock Oysters to West Mersea Native Oysters—and even tempura oysters with a wasabi dressing.

### **33 A crustacean in a bun at Burger & Lobster**

**29 Clarges Street, Mayfair (www.burgerandlobster.com) £**

This restaurant does what it says on the tin: burger and lobster. The menu is stripped back, allowing the kitchen to churn out big volumes of impeccably cooked lobster. The result is dining decadence at affordable prices, with one ton of lobster kept in the enormous on-site tank to deal with demand. You can't make reservations at the Green Park branch, but the bar does exceptional cocktails, meaning you can have a drink or two while you wait for a table to free up.

### **34 Chocolate-flavoured savouries at Rabot 1745**

**GOOD FOR VEG**

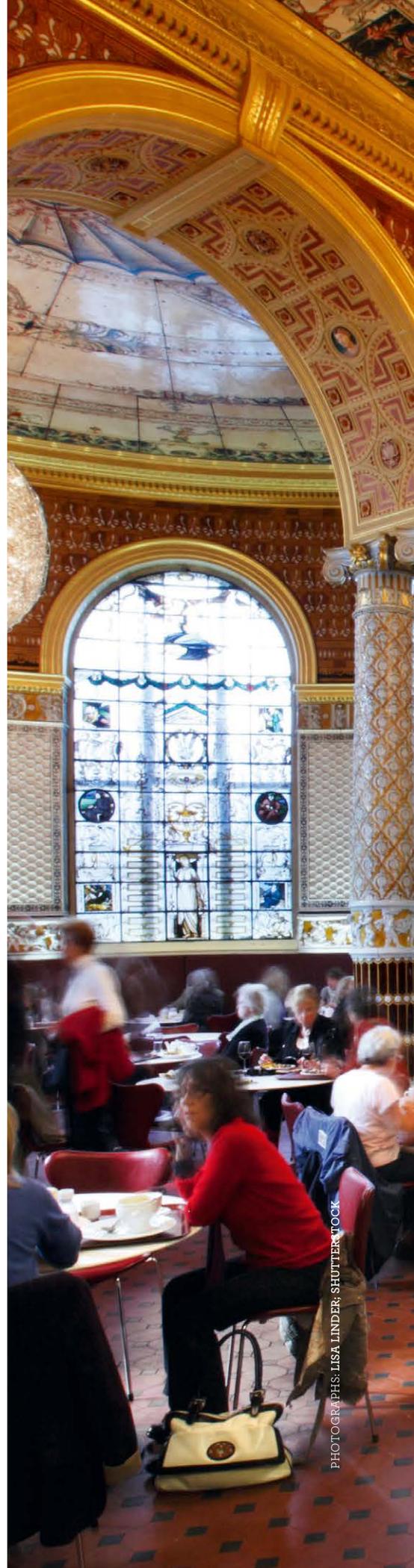
**2-4 Beadale Street, Borough Market (www.hotelchocolat.com) ££**

Rabot 1745 is a chocoholic's dream, serving both sweet and savoury dishes, all enhanced with—you've guessed it—chocolate. It's run by Hotel Chocolat, a British chocolatier which grows its own cocoa at The Rabot Estate on the Caribbean island of St Lucia. It's a must for chocolate connoisseurs, whether popping by for an iced chocolate mocha, or shoulder of lamb with a cocoa balsamic dressing and a Rabot rum baba.

### **35 Ice cream at Gelupo** **GOOD FOR VEG**

**7 Archer Street, Piccadilly Circus (www.gelupo.com) £**

In 2008, Jacob Kenedy opened Italian restaurant Bocca di Lupo, and soon after commandeered another shop across the road, Gelupo, where he makes the smoothest, richest Italian ice cream. The pistachio one is particularly special. But there is something for everyone at Gelupo—from esoteric flavours, such as saffron or pepper to classic vanilla.



PHOTOGRAPHS: LISA LINDER; SHUTTERSTOCK



### **36 Food for thought at The V&A Café**

**Victoria & Albert Museum,  
Cromwell Road, South Kensington  
([www.vam.ac.uk](http://www.vam.ac.uk)) £**

The tiled walls, towering pillars and dramatic archways make this a memorable place to grab a bite. Located in the Victoria & Albert Museum, The V&A Café is a good spot to rest your feet if you've been tramping round the museums on Exhibition Road. The food is simple but tasty, with salads, sandwiches and sponge cake—the perfect fuel on a day's sightseeing.



## *Middle Eastern*

### **37 Home-style cooking at Honey & Co.**

**25A Warren Street (<http://honeyandco.co.uk>) £**

This tiny Middle Eastern restaurant has been built with love, down to the Moorish floor tiles, sticky sponge cakes in the window and homemade preserves stacked on the walls. It is run by a husband-and-wife team that really knows how to enhance the flavour of a carrot, spice a tagine and whisk up a quince salad. Everything is loaded with flavour and served in a happy and relaxed family atmosphere. Honey & Co.'s limited space and cult following means that it's best to book a table if you're planning to go at a busy time of day.

### **38 Vegetarian Middle Eastern at NOPI** GOOD FOR VEG

**21-22 Warwick Street, Soho ([www.nopi-restaurant.com](http://www.nopi-restaurant.com)) ££**

With four branches of his successful deli, three bestselling cookbooks and three television series under his belt, it was no surprise when, in 2011, chef Yotam Ottolenghi announced that he was launching a restaurant. NOPI doesn't stray far from the colourful, Middle Eastern food he's famed for. Vegetarians should note that there's plenty to choose from. And the vegetable dishes are full of flavour, such as the crushed carrot, rose harissa and grains of paradise labneh, or the roasted aubergine with feta, pickled cucumber and pumpkin seeds.

### **39 Fusion dishes at Moro**

**34-36 Exmouth Market, Angel ([www.moro.co.uk](http://www.moro.co.uk)) £**

After three months of driving through southern Spain, Morocco and the Sahara, husband-and-wife team Sam and Sam Clark founded Moro. Their carefully constructed menu continues to be inspired by their trips, and the result is a subtle and beautifully flavoured selection of dishes. Moro's clever and delicious dishes feature a seabass ceviche served with bergamot orange and cumin, and a simple yoghurt sponge cake garnished with pistachios and pomegranate.

**The V&A Café.** Opposite, from top: **Cuttlefish with broad beans and mint at Moro; ice cream at Gelupo**



### 45 Dim sum at Yauatcha

15-17 Broadwick Street, Soho ([www.yauatcha.com](http://www.yauatcha.com)) ££

A modern version of a Chinese teahouse by the folks behind Hakkasan, this is where the restaurant (which has three other outposts—in Mumbai, Bengaluru and New Delhi) began in 2004. It's open late, and serves excellent cocktails, but the main draw is the dim sum.

### 46 Korean food at Bibimbap Soho

11 Greek Street, Soho (<http://bibimbapsoho.co.uk>) £

This Korean joint might not look like much from the outside, but its bibimbap has earned it a cult following among Londoners. The rice-based main course is served in an oven-hot granite bowl which retains heat and continues to cook the rice and extras such as beef.

### 47 'Surprise' dining at Hunan

51 Pimlico Rd, off Sloane Square ([www.hunanlondon.com](http://www.hunanlondon.com)) ££

"We're not your typical Chinese restaurant," Hunan boasts; and they're right. There isn't a formal menu—instead, diners are asked their likes and dislikes, and are then 'surprised' by whichever dishes cook and owner Chef Peng whisks out of the kitchen. Expect a quick and exciting string of small dishes—from frogs' legs and broths to tofu and deep-fried aubergine.

### 48 Classic Vietnamese at Tre Viet

245-249 Mare Street, Hackney (<http://treviet.co.uk>) £

Tre Viet is a beautiful, light space adorned with ceiling lanterns and Vietnamese-inspired murals. The menu is simple, elegant and good value. Choose from palate-cleansing soups, bánh mì baguette or a sharing platter.

### 49 Sake and sophistication at Zuma

5 Raphael Street, Knightsbridge ([www.zumarestaurant.com](http://www.zumarestaurant.com)) ££

Zuma takes inspiration from a Japanese izakaya, which combines dining and drinking, similar to Spanish tapas. Start the night in the sake bar, which stocks more than 40 varieties, then move into the main restaurant to sample delights such as the ise ebi (lobster tempura).

### 50 Dependable Thai at Busaba Eathai

106-110 Wardour Street, Soho (<http://busaba.com>) £

Founded by Alan Yau, the brain behind the Wagamama chain, it offers authentic Thai salads, noodles, curries and stir-fries. It is also known for its fresh fruit juices and smoothies.

**With inputs by Himani Shah, Ravinder Bhogal and Rashmi Uday Singh**

## Asian



### 40 New-wave Indian at Gymkhana

42 Albemarle Street ([www.gymkhanalondon.com](http://www.gymkhanalondon.com)) ££

Taking inspiration from colonial gymkhana clubs, this new-wave Indian restaurant's dining room is richly decorated, featuring oak panelling, chequerboard floors and a grand brass bar. Here, British ingredients are fused with tandoori dishes. Think venison keema with naan, duck egg bhurji or lobster with Malabar paratha.

### 41 Irani eats at Dishoom

7 Boundary Street, Shoreditch ([www.dishoom.com](http://www.dishoom.com)) £

Dishoom pays homage to Mumbai's Irani cafés with slow-turning fans, fading family photographs and wicker chairs. It's good for a lassi, chai or roomali roll any time of the year, but the skate cheeks koliwada in a spicy crisp batter with tamarind date chutney is a particular speciality.

### 42 Michelin-starred Indian food at Amaya

Halkin Arcade, Motcomb Street, Knightsbridge ([www.amaya.biz](http://www.amaya.biz)) ££

Located in the heart of Belgravia, Michelin-starred Amaya follows traditional Indian cooking methods. Expect old-world flavour, with new-age presentation and ingredients such as foie gras at this slick restaurant.

[cntraveller.in](http://cntraveller.in)

For more favourite London restaurant picks from Himani Shah & Ravinder Bhogal



### 43 Ramen at Tonkotsu

63 Dean Street, Soho ([www.tonkotsu.co.uk](http://www.tonkotsu.co.uk)) £

Tonkotsu's broths are lip-smackingly thick and heartening, salted with miso and soya, and flavoured with shimeji mushrooms, garlic and ginger. It has recently won a much-deserved award for London's best 'cheap eats'.

### 44 Chinese banquet at Kai Mayfair

65 South Audley Street, Mayfair ([www.kaimayfair.co.uk](http://www.kaimayfair.co.uk)) ££

This Michelin-starred Chinese restaurant's menu starts with smoked goose, pan-fried foie gras and braised abalone with black truffle. For main courses, there is steamed lobster and Wagyu beef. Puddings are listed at the start of the menu to remind diners to keep space for the chocolate fondant.



**Biryani at Dishoom.** Opposite, from top left: Diners at Busaba Eathai; a chef at Busaba Eathai; Saigon crispy pancake at Tre Viet