

quizzical about a “One Eleven” cocktail, featuring “pressed mandarin, mandarin oil, mandarin acid and mandarin broth”, to be told, “It’s like the best vodka and orange you’ll ever neck.” This is an accurate description. I also love their refusal to dumb down. Nasi lemak comes with its mandatory ikan bilis, whole, tiny dried anchovies; and the coconut chicken gravy served alongside a vast, crisp, deep-fried spring onion pancake is shimmering with the strident honk of belachan or cincalok (fermented shrimp paste).

Their version of som tam — or, as they put it in what seems like typical no-nonsense style, green papaya salad: well, just wow. In his book about his nearby, much-loved Mother India restaurant, the owner, Monir Mohammed, wrote a small passage about my father, an enthusiastic and early fan of the place, describing how he’d mop his brow with a napkin after regular fiery feasts. After this

innocent-looking dish with its tiny squiggles of dried shrimp, I’m doing exactly the same: no pandering to any *farang* snowflakiness here. That’s an extra layer of poignancy to the delicious pain.

Nonya’s co-owner Andy Kelly is half Thai — from Isan, as you might be able to infer from the laab and sticky rice and som tam. So this is not the box-ticking, crowd-pleasing, polyglot nonsense of “fusion”, but the dishes that shaped the restaurant’s cast of characters. Rather than a “bung in the soy sauce and sriracha” mishmash, each dish is true to its heritage, and beautifully realised. For an ambitious chef, heading so far north might seem like a shift away from the potential limelight, but I reckon Hopkins has made exactly the right move: the city has a new star. I suspect she’s cooking the food she loves. And London’s loss is very much Glasgow’s gain ■

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## A lot on her plate Three more things Marina ate last week



### FIRST-CLASS PARCELS

Tortelloni stuffed with a ripe squelch of oxtail and deep, dark broth with star anise and confit onion — one of the creative dishes from the new Glasgow restaurant Gather by Zique, from the people behind Delizique. [delizique.com](http://delizique.com)



### THRILL OF BEANS

Love this springlike simplicity from brilliant Eusebi, off Glasgow’s Gibson Street, where the deli has a 40-year history: fat pods of new beans with a young pecorino romano. Don’t need to use a knife and fork, as one diner was bravely attempting. [eusebideli.com](http://eusebideli.com)



### CHIPS WITH EVERYTHING

Now here’s a very fine chip: chunky and floury, with multiple fryings. From the Cleveland Arms in Bayswater: a beautiful restoration of a fine historic pub. [theclevelandarms.com](http://theclevelandarms.com)

## TRENDING Adult soft drinks

There’s no beer guzzling at Redemption Bar, no red eyes or slurred sentences. Instead, the glowing clientele at these alcohol-free joints in London sip apple “mockjitos” and catch up over a pint of Fitbeer — a zero-alcohol, low-calorie craft lager.

Teetotalism is on the up, and the soft drinks market is growing up fast. “There’s an increased demand for products from smaller-scale suppliers that incorporate on-trend, exciting ingredients made using unusual and interesting methods of production,” confirms Gary Hyde, senior buying manager at Ocado.

Firms such as Shrb Drinks are reviving the centuries-old method of steeping herbs and fruit in vinegar to make a natural concentrate. The alcohol-like kick made it popular during the Prohibition era, and it’s fitting that the revival has coincided with a new wave of temperance.

“What’s most important for me is the palate-cleansing acidity, which means that the ‘Prohibition sodas’ pair well with food,” says the Shrb founder, Mustafa Mahmud.

### ZERO ALCOHOL LIFTS YOUR SPIRITS



#### 1 Shrb Drinks

Harrods; £3.20 for 330ml ([shrbdrinks.com](http://shrbdrinks.com))

#### 2 Jarr Kombucha

Whole Foods Market; from £3.49 for 240ml ([jarrkombucha.com](http://jarrkombucha.com))

#### 3 Square Root Soda

Tate Modern, all Draft House pubs and BrewDog bars; from £1.75 for 275ml ([squarerootsoda.co.uk](http://squarerootsoda.co.uk))

#### 4 Peter Spanton

Ocado; from £1 for 200ml ([peterspanton.com](http://peterspanton.com))

#### 5 Surendran & Bownes Labdanum

£20 for 500ml ([surendran-bownes.com](http://surendran-bownes.com))

Kombucha is another resurrected recipe, positioning the ancient Chinese fermented tea as an alcohol alternative. The dry, scrumpy-like taste, natural fizz and health claims have won kombucha a cult following. Jarr, just one of many new purveyors, sells “booch” at several Whole Foods Market stores, as well as at its “tap room” in east London.

Meanwhile, the Hakkasan Group has unveiled an alcohol-free drinks menu, the Orchard List, introducing Mai-Shin (a rice and Japanese tea infusion) and Ogam (a wood-infused water from France). Shoppers can add Peter Spanton’s salted paloma grapefruit soda to their Ocado basket, or order a Square Root soda (“made with no shortcuts, no weird stuff and no compromises”) at BrewDog pubs.

Sophisticated alcohol-free options have now reached cocktail menus and “mocktails” are out. A “nogroni” uses the non-alcoholic “gins” Seedlip and Labdanum, and their distilled botanicals make a complex cocktail.

Drinks this summer will still be shaken...but not slurred ■

Rachel Walker