

Shop Small

THE SPRING EDIT

Celebrating small business



Spring Trends

From cash-free counters and co-working kitchens to mezcal and much, much more.

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EDITOR'S *Letter*



Welcome to *Shop Small*, a magazine brought to you in a new partnership between Courier and American Express. *Shop Small* celebrates the small businesses doing big things for their local community.

From the local butcher, baker and grocer to the chemist, newsagent and local café, small businesses are the anchors of their community. They help build a neighbourhood's unique identity, create valuable local jobs and often give back to important local causes.

In this magazine, we're bringing you an insightful round up of small business trends to keep on your radar this Spring. We've looked at the rise of innovative independent cafés such as Redemption Roasters, and we've created a small business guide to the bustling area of Bellenden Road in the south London neighbourhood of Peckham — plus much more.

We hope you enjoy it.

— The Editors
COURIER MAGAZINE



We're delighted to partner with Courier on this special magazine. Whether you're looking for new places to visit on the high street, running a small business or thinking of setting up on your own, we think you'll find plenty of inspiration inside.

American Express has a long history of working with independent businesses and, as the founder and principal supporter of Small Business Saturday, we are proud to celebrate the innovation, creativity and passion of the thousands of small business owners across the country.

We hope you enjoy the magazine and encourage you to show your support by shopping small.

— Charlotte Duerden
MANAGING DIRECTOR UK, AMERICAN EXPRESS

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Nik Southern preparing spring orders at *Grace & Thorn*, her florist and plant shop in Hackney. Photography by Kate Friend

Shop talk

Lessons, tips and tricks from the world of small business - from staffing, to expansion, to establishing your point of difference.



Neighbourhood: Peckham

Peckham is having a moment. Take a look at our guide to some of the best independent restaurants, cafés and retailers on Bellenden Road and beyond.



The round up

Our pick of independent stockists in London, and where to find them.

Trends for Spring 2019

What can we expect from independent retail, food and drink this season? Our editors round up the top 12 trends to look out for.



On our radar

5 stores to have on your radar this year - from a surf shop making waves in Bristol, to a boutique hotel with a difference in central London.



New kids on the block

Crispin is the new all day restaurant in Spitalfields from Dom Hamdy and Oliver Hiam. We spent a day in the life of their business, from morning espresso to evening wine tasting.

Our round up of *TRENDS* for *Spring* 2019

From the rise of mezcal to the popularity of recipe boxes, big businesses often find inspiration for new products from the independents. In fact, most mainstream retail trends, if you look closely, begin small - it's the kind of trickle-up effect we all benefit from. And it's easy to get excited about shopping small when the UK's independent food, drink and retail scene is this impressive. From foraged chutneys to a former coal depot emerging like a phoenix from the ashes, here's our round-up of all the trends to watch out for among the indies in Spring 2019.

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Shop Small

The Spring Edit



1

SPICE UP YOUR LIFE

Chefs don't bank on flavour from discoloured spices dating back to the early 2000s, so why should home cooks? Step forward Rooted Spices, a range of tin caddies filled with single-origin spices and blends like urfa pul biber (a Turkish aromatic everyday table spice) and Amchur dried mango. Founded by Clara Glass and Rachel Walker, Rooted Spices are super fresh and sourced from single suppliers, and refills are available when you run out. The kind of kitchen ammunition that looks good on your shelf and tastes even better in your dishes.



3

IN GOOD SPIRITS

Mezcal - or agave distillate - is a complex spirit that's been quietly igniting the London bar scene. With import duty on the drink being much higher than in continental Europe or the US, it's been slow to penetrate the British market but Michael Sager, director of Sager + Wilde wine bar, is convinced 2019 could be the year it breaks through to retail. "The next logical thing for a consumer to say is why would I have tequila that's industrially produced, if I can have an artisanal product with a story," he explains, speaking from a research

trip in Paris, where mezcal has been a cocktail bar mainstay for years. Now head of independent spirits label El Destilado, which he set up with business partners Marcis Dzelzainis and East London Liquor Company founder Alex Wolpert, we grabbed five minutes to talk distillates...

Why did you start with mezcal?

'Provenance is important and for me, there's no other spirit that embraces this like mezcal. It's truly artisanal. We've had such a strong response - perhaps because we're all barmen and restaurateurs doing this - but also because British drinkers love clear spirits and tequila has sort of paved the way for mezcal. People want to try new things, despite the sometimes prohibitive price point.'



What's the story of the mezcal bottle design?

'We wanted pure transparency, because this spirit is all about who makes it, where it comes from and how it's made. I sent some design references like Byredo and Aesop to Charlie McKay, who helped us develop our restaurant Fare. It only took four or five meetings - he just gets us. We wanted it to stand out on a back bar or shelf.'

What's next?

'Mezcal's not financially viable yet because it's made in such small amounts, so we're working on 16 expressions of uncertified agave distillates and three sugar cane distillates, including oaxacan white rum and pineapple eau de vie. We want to rediscover niche spirits and bring them to the people who care.'

2 NEW RETAIL HUBS

Once a coal depot before becoming a glass warehouse and a music venue, architect-designers Heatherwick Studio sculpted Coal Drops Yard into an impressive complex of Victorian brick arches, cast-iron architecture and cobblestoned paving. Chic shopping choices include Beija Lingerie, Wolf and Badger and an Earl of East London candle pouring store. But the best bit? First-rate eating gets as much of a look-in as the shops. Survey your purchases with a plate of buttery, smoky pancetta cotta giovanna and a glass of orange wine at The Drop (headed up by the team behind Barrafinna, Quo Vadis and El Pastor), before a nightcap at Vermuteria. 18 years after plans were first proposed, these disused railway properties have emerged truly drop-dead gorgeous.



Shop Small

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4 (MISSHAPEN) FRUIT OF GOOD FORTUNE

2018 was the summer of wonky fruit and veg. Sales of misshapen produce soared as ranges expanded at many of the major supermarkets, but the trend has long been ripe among the independents. Launched in 2011, Rubies in the Rubble rescues fruit in a pickle to make award-winning condiments like spicy banana ketchup and chipotle mayo, while Oddbox delivers a selection of ugly (but delicious) perishables to Londoners' doorsteps. Zero waste dining and drinking is sprouting slower, but head to Cub restaurant in London, Doug McMaster's collaboration with 'the world's best bartender' Ryan Chetiyawardana (otherwise known as Mr Lyan) - for a cocktail led six-dish set menu. A champagne coupe of 'ugly' peaches, Bruichladdich whiskey and Islay seaweed, anyone?



6 CASHLESS COUP

The Athenian began serving up its Greek street food from a small Haringey market in 2014 and within a year, had expanded to six full-time locations across London and Bristol. "In 2015, we started doing food festivals around London and wanted to give people the option of paying by card," say founders Efthymios and Neofytos. "The technology was there so it made sense to go cashless. Any street food operator, especially those thinking about acquiring a permanent site, would improve their day to day process by going cashless." In terms of time efficiency, it eliminates the need to cash up at the end of a shift.



5 MEAT FREE MARKET

January 2019 was the month that 'Veganuary' seemed to propel veganism from a niche campaign to a mainstream movement. According to data from market expert Mintel, Britain has now overtaken Germany with the most vegan brand launches in the world and London has dozens of specialist vegan joints, with a buzzing junk food scene that's worth trekking across the city to sample. Many are so successful, they're opening multiple sites: Temple of Seitan's finger-lickin' fried 'chicken,' What the Pitta's vegan doner kebabs and fried jackfruit patties at Biff's Jack Shack, to name but a few. 2019 is the year of the vegan burger though, with plant-based burger brands that "bleed" now available on many supermarket shelves. Pure meat-free magic.

A report conducted by Big Hospitality suggests that cash-free tech can raise per-head spend too. Of course, card-only bill settlement is cost-effective and faster for customers - a fifth of Britons don't carry cash and two-thirds of people in the UK now use contactless payments regularly. As a wave of card-only venues hit UK high streets, from artisan Manchester coffee house Takk to café Browns of Brockley and Nunhead micro-pub The Beer Shop, could we be waving goodbye to fumbling with coins and notes? You'd be wise to put money on it.



7 WASTE NOT, WANT ALL

With an estimated eight to ten million tonnes of plastic ending up in our oceans every year, plastic waste is becoming the defining environmental issue of the decade. Zero waste independents like Glasgow's Locavore are flying the flag for plastic-free shopping. Building a sustainable food system which includes a zero waste shop, veg box scheme and farm, Locavore sells organic dry goods, eco-friendly household cleaners, local honey, cheese, milk and locally made bread. According to a 2018 investigation by The Guardian, a fifth of the average UK shopping bill goes towards the cost of packaging, so the joy of scooping and measuring your weekly shop will not only soothe your eco-guilt, but your wallet too.

8 FOLLOW THE PAPER TRAIL

The success of stationery start-up Papier is a sure sign that tangible, personalised paper products are back on the cards. Aiming to 'inspire people to connect with each other in a more thoughtful way and more often,' Papier is set to take a significant chunk of the UK's £2.5 billion stationery market and has collaborated on ranges with the likes of interiors darling Luke Edward Hall and writer Dolly Alderton, to engage millennial consumers. If browsing IRL is more your thing, Papersmiths in Brighton is a scribbler's Shangri-La.



9 A RENAISSANCE PLAN

Some of Britain's most iconic spaces are getting a facelift. Mackie Mayor Dining Hall in Manchester's Northern Quarter has reinvigorated the former meat market, filling this 1858 grade II listed building with top-end food and drink operators, housed in a beautifully restored Victorian structure. In London, high end street food spot Market Halls in Fulham has added modern day magic to the Edwardian's London ticket hall. Whoever said you can't teach an old dog new tricks?



10 SEAT AT THE CHEF'S TABLE

Over the past five years, the boundaries of what fine dining means have broadened. While there will always be a place in the world of restaurants for white table cloths and polished silverware, in 2019 the trend is for a more relaxed dining experience, with finesse coming from precise cooking and a detailed order of service. We sat down with Nicholas Balfe, head chef and owner of Levan in Peckham and Salon in Brixton, to discuss restaurant influences and upcoming openings.

Which restaurants most influenced Levan and Salon?

'Relae in Copenhagen is a big inspiration for me. They're progressive, exciting and boundary pushing, but accessible, inviting and ultimately delicious!'

Do you have any restaurant openings on your radar for spring?

'I can't wait to see what the Lyle's team does with their second site, Flor in Borough. I'm a big fan of Primeur, Westerns Laundry and Jolene, so I'm looking forward to their Cornish outpost. I'm also overdue a visit to Coombeshead Farm - especially now Oscar Holgado has taken over as head chef.'

Finally, which ingredients are inspiring you this spring?

'All those lovely green shoots and leaves - wild garlic, sorrel, three-cornered leeks and inevitably nettles. I'm looking forward to picking them as much as I am cooking them!'



11

DIY HIGH

In times of economic crisis or uncertainty, people seek self-sustaining skills – like cooking and sewing – that will help them in the long-term. Being able to bake a loaf of bread from scratch rather than buy it from a shop feels good because it demonstrates frugality and self-reliance – hence the success of TV shows like *The Great British Bake Off* and *The Great British Sewing Bee* shortly after. Whether it's dabbling with modern floristry techniques at The Flower Bar and School or learning how to create punch needle art at SMUG in Camden Passage, DIY workshops are the new going out. Swap Friday drinks for a post-work welding class and you might even meet new pals while you're at it.

12

SWITCH-UP KITCHENS

Tech companies have long operated in co-working spaces – a study by Cushman & Wakefield found that central London had 2.5 million sq ft of lettings signed for flexible workspaces in 2017, a 190% increase on the previous year – but there's no equivalent for the food and drink industry. Until sisters Gini and Eccie Newton opened Karma Kitchen in October 2018. Businesses like Pip and Nut and Island Poké rent the east London workspace in 8 or 16-hour shifts, after which they clean up and clock off. With discounted Quikup couriers and access to equipment without having to maintain it, it's a radical new way to produce.



Trend watch

Sarah Willingham

In partnership with
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DIY HIGH: SARAH'S TOP 3 TIPS

'CREATIVE WORKSHOPS are becoming more popular than ever,' reveals Sarah Willingham, American Express' Shop Small ambassador. 'It's a great way for small independent businesses to attract customers and generate an added boost to their profits. People love learning something new and are increasingly looking for an experience beyond just buying a product. Running a workshop is a lovely add-on and really maximises the return on the company's assets.'

If you're a small business owner and the thought of introducing a workshop appeals to you, then here are Sarah's top 3 tips for success:



For more inspiration about how American Express can help support you to grow your business, search: Shop Small

1 Don't be afraid of giving away your magic

You'll be making people appreciate and respect your expertise, not giving away your trade secrets. It lets you share your passion and feel rewarded while doing so.

2 Marketing is essential

You need to tell people what you're doing. Put a sign outside, tease people on your social media channels and reward your existing customers for spreading the word, such as by giving them a discount if they return with friends.

3 Think about the experience

Make it as fun, as interactive and as memorable as possible, because ultimately, your customers are your best marketers. Keep the workshops different enough so that customers feel they can keep coming back to build on existing skills or learn new ones.

SHOP Talk

Running a small business can be challenging – but incredibly rewarding. To help you navigate the right path, we've sought out advice, tips and lessons from those who have been there before. We visit three coffee shops standing out from the crowd in London, Bristol and Brighton – from **Redemption Roasters** and their barista training programme for ex-offenders, to **Full Court Press** taking lessons from the big chains. We also make the trip to neighbourhood restaurant **27 Elliott's** in Edinburgh to sample a springtime dish of fresh tomato orzo, and speak to **Maya Magal** about how she was able to grow her small jewellery business from one to three London stores in only six months.

Small Bean businesses

As cafés overtake pubs as the main place to meet and greet, there's been an explosion of specialist and independent coffee shops. In such a competitive climate, having an angle is everything.



Raising the bar

How London-based Redemption Roasters is helping young offenders get a fresh start.

MAX DUBIEL DIDN'T start out in business with charitable intentions, but in 2016, when the Ministry of Justice approached the entrepreneurial coffee wholesaler about a barista training programme for young offenders, he saw an opportunity. After visiting HM Prison Aylesbury, he and business partner Ted Rosner realised there was a gap in the market. 'Coffee is a huge and fast-growing business, especially in London, but at the same time underprivileged youths have absolutely no access to it,' says Dubiel. 'The idea came up, not just to offer these guys skills, but also links into employment.'

This was the birth of Redemption Roasters, a speciality coffee business with a social conscience that runs cafés in Bloomsbury, Farringdon, and the new Coal Drops Yard retail district. But the real talking point is the company's sleek roastery,



BEAN AND GONE

Inmates at Aylesbury roast the coffee before it's shipped to Redemption's London cafés.

housed within the young offenders institution at Aylesbury. Here, inmates aged 18 to 21 learn basic barista skills and customer service, and roast the coffee bound for Redemption's cafés and broader wholesale business. There are also new barista training academies at HMP Bullingdon, Springhill

and Wormwood Scrubs, with more planned to bring additional trainees through the system. The ideal outcome is for inmates who 'graduate' with Redemption to find work with the company on their release.

'That's when they are at their most vulnerable,' says Dubiel. 'So we

offer them more support and are probably a bit more lenient when they're late or if they have small hiccups. After about six months, we pass them on to one of our wholesale clients or the wider industry. If they don't reoffend, we've done our job.'

It might sound worthy but as Dubiel points out, having a company with solid corporate social responsibility equates to a strong business advantage. 'We've done very well out of the public impact we've had,' he says. 'It gives us a clear point of difference. Also, in our case, working with ex-offenders means working with an individual who has been given a second chance and we have been rewarded with hard work and loyalty. If someone has a criminal record you'll know a lot about them – much more so than hiring someone through the labour market.'

What it does mean, however, is that Redemption has to hold itself to a higher standard. 'Our product has to be amazing, even better than the competition,' says Dubiel. 'We couldn't be shouting from our high horse and then be serving up bad coffee.'

redemptionroasters.com



Pressing ahead

Experience working with big chains enabled Mat North to turn Full Court Press into one of Bristol's best-loved independents.

You got your start as a barista at Caffè Nero. What did you learn from that experience?

'Working for any of the big chains is a real education; it gave me an excellent grounding in efficiencies and good financial practices. Chains have systems for literally everything – they are at the point where they can measure and quantify all of the basics, like greetings, wait times, wastage etc, so

they can focus on other things. They know just how easy it is to lose a customer, so these systems allow the staff to focus on service to avoid this happening.'

Bristol is renowned for its food and drink culture. How has the local scene changed since you started Full Court Press?

'When we opened six years ago we were only the third of the new wave of shops to open

in Bristol. The speciality scene only really arrived in Bristol in late 2012, so what's been amazing is the rate of change, both in quality and offering. We've seen explosions of quality independent bakers, breweries, distilleries, cocktail bars and, of course, coffee shops. It's a very exciting time to be involved.'

How do you make an impression in such a competitive market?

'If you don't have a USP, then branding and look really comes to the fore, though this can be a problem as it leads to homogeneity of both look and offer – something perpetuated by Pinterest, Instagram etc. In this situation it's all about location and service. What we've done at FCP is aim for the very top of the quality sector of the market. Our offer is more akin to a wine bar than it is to a traditional café, with new coffees to try each week and a very limited food offering.'

What have independent cafés brought to coffee culture in the UK?

'Variety. Ostensibly we all serve the same product, but it's easy to see that there are a myriad ways to present it. Thankfully, there are enough customers that fall on either side of the fence to keep both independents and chains in business.'



Taking Root

As Brighton’s coffee scene continues to evolve, speciality cafés such as The Plant Room are holding their own thanks to a core base of increasingly discerning customers.

FOR ALEX MCKENDRY, owner of Brighton’s The Plant Room, the answer to building a loyal customer base lies in not obsessing about what others are doing. ‘Coffee shops come and go all the time in Brighton,’ he says. ‘But the way I look at it, it’s about having a good product, good service and a good space – it’s that perfect golden triangle of things you need to get right to keep customers coming back. So, we focus on what we do and try not to worry about the rest.’

McKendry operates three sites of The Plant Room in Brighton and Hove, each offering Allpress coffee and vegetarian and vegan snacks in bright contemporary spaces filled with, yes, plants. For McKendry, who sees coffee shops as the new ‘third spaces’ – superseding shopping centres or pubs as a place for people to meet and socialise – the key is ensuring that customers feel they have a connection to a space. ‘Coffee shops should make you want to spend time there,’ he says. ‘We’re not trying to force people to spend money, we’re not trying to upsell, we’re just trying to create a relaxing environment and great coffee, and the rest will follow.’

Brighton’s café scene has been booming for more than a decade. According to Caffeine Magazine, the city’s residents drink more coffee per capita than anywhere else in the UK, including London, and the



CAFE CULTURE

Alex McKendry, owner of The Plant Room in Brighton.

says. ‘Because The Plant Room has a strong core base of veggie and vegan customers, we offer some really good dairy alternatives – we’ve got oat milk from Minor Figures in East Dulwich and Bonsoy, a great-quality Australian soy milk. Cafés such as The Plant Room focus on keeping standards high, and building loyalty through quality. ‘I do think there’s always going to be space for all because coffee shops have a really small catchment,’ says McKendry. ‘If you think about your favourites, they’re probably near your home, on your way to work or near somewhere you visit often. Realistically, how we make our money is through those people who come in time and time again.’

theplantroomcoffee.com

industry is worth some £55 million, with the number of coffee shops having doubled over the past decade.

But while speciality cafés are a big part of that growth, McKendry says the chains exert a powerful influence over customer expectations. ‘It’s interesting to see how they affect what people ask for in the independents,’ he

Food Fast

A fresh and simple recipe for spring, packed with Mediterranean flavours for that first al fresco meal of the season.

HEALTHY EATING IS often one of the first things to go when you’re pulling the kind of hours that setting up a new business demands. Jessica Elliott Dennison, founder of 27.Elliott’s, a neighbourhood café and supper club space in the heart of Edinburgh, has proven that healthy eating doesn’t have to be overly time consuming. She took some time out of prepping fresh pasta for the evening’s service to give *Shop Small* an exclusive recipe for roast tomato orzo from her book *Salad Feasts*.

‘Your oven does all the hard work here, turning the tomatoes all burnished, sticky and intensely sweet,’ says Jessica of the dish. ‘And like most roast tomato dishes, the flavours get even better with time, so this is a nice option if you need to make something hearty in advance.’

A scattering of dukkah brings a smoky, spiced crunch to the silky orzo pasta. Check out Dennison’s book for a homemade version of this versatile spice and nut-based condiment, which you can make and store in bulk to use for future feasts.

27elliotts.com



RECIPE

Roast tomato orzo

Serves 4 (Prep time 25 minutes)

- 600g ripe cherry tomatoes
- small bunch thyme, leaves only
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- ½ tsp sea salt flakes
- ¼ tsp cracked black pepper
- ½ tsp chilli flakes (optional)
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 2 large garlic cloves, unpeeled
- 300g orzo
- large bunch flat-leaf parsley, leaves only, roughly chopped
- 1 lemon
- 3 tbsp dukkah (optional)

METHOD

1 — Preheat oven to 220C and bring a medium pan of water to the boil.

2 — Slice the tomatoes, some in halves, some in quarters, then add to a large roasting tray in a single layer. Scatter over the thyme leaves and add the oil, salt, pepper, chilli flakes (if using), cumin and garlic cloves. Gently toss and roast for 15 mins. Remove and reserve the garlic, then roast the tomatoes for a further 5 minutes.

3 — Meanwhile, add the orzo to the boiling water (according to the packet instructions, 8-10 minutes for al dente). Refresh under cold water, then drain.

4 — Squeeze the roasted garlic flesh into the roasting tray. Using a fork, mash the garlic and half the tomatoes into a chunky pulp. Add the cooked orzo to the tray, then peel in all the zest and squeeze in the juice of half the lemon; add more to taste. Scatter over the parsley, then stir everything together. Transfer to a large platter, scatter over the dukkah, and serve.

27.ELLIOTT’S

Recipe extracted from *Salad Feasts* by Jessica Elliott Dennison (Hardie Grant, £16.99).

Linking Together

How does a young designer jewellery brand expand from one store to three in only six months?



FOR MAYA MAGAL, who expanded her jewellery business into some of the most sought-after retail spaces in London in less than half a year, the answer has been a little luck, team support, and a lot of communication. ‘The third store really wasn’t planned,’ says Magal of her recently opened eponymous King’s Cross boutique. ‘It was an opportunity that came up at Coal Drops Yard. They offered me a space after seeing the hard work I’d put into my first two stores.’

Magal, whose contemporary designs are all about everyday luxury, has always been keen to imbue her stores with a sense of accessibility, and the King’s Cross outlet is no exception, with its bright gold touches and plants dotted around. Having started out in Hatton Garden, she says she was keen to move into something more contemporary. ‘We’ve got a

lot of jewellery out on display, so customers can choose their own without having to ask the sales assistant if they don’t want to.’

The King’s Cross opening came hard on the heels of her expansion to Marylebone from her original Islington store, and with a steep learning curve. ‘We went from a team of four or five to over fifteen,’ says Magal. ‘Things got easier and harder with each store. With the first I had no kind of proof that I could run a viable shop, but with the second and third I had that, along with the customers and the data behind me.’

What got harder, she says, was the day-to-day stuff, such as juggling stock and staff and learning how to run three teams. ‘When you’re opening a new store and you’ve got big construction projects going on, which take up all your time, energy and focus, you can lose sight of

running the business,’ says Magal. Something that’s helped has been introducing Monday meetings which everyone in the company joins in. ‘We sit down and discuss what we’ve done that week and what’s coming up, just to help with communication and support each other,’ she says. ‘It’s a work in progress, and the key is flexibility.’

● mayamagal.co.uk



STRIKING GOLD

Maya’s third site opened in November 2018 as part of the Coal Drops Yard retail mix in King’s Cross.

Maya on healthy growth

In a time of huge online retail expansion in fashion and design, Maya offers three tips for operating a boutique-sized business on the high street.



Customer Engagement
‘I much prefer having my customers in front of me. Once the business got going, there was never really a time I didn’t consider having a bricks and mortar store. In an age when everyone is going digital, it’s very difficult to compete online, and besides we didn’t have that experience, so it made sense to focus on what we’re good at.’

Maintaining control
‘We say we are everyday luxury because we offer individualistic, affordable designs. Having my own store means we can control our prices.’

Future moves
‘Before opening in a new location, I’d definitely consider testing the area and market with a pop-up. It’s something I haven’t done so far as things have happened so fast, and I’m quite impulsive, but I can certainly see it would be a good idea in the future.’





“ETHICS AND SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY ARE BIG FOR US...”

It can be hard to make waves in the competitive world of e-commerce, but backed by friends and family and with an ethical approach, former Great Britain swimmers and Neat Nutrition founders Lee Forster and Charlie Turner have taken their online protein powder business into the fast lane.

There are a lot of dietary supplements out there. But in 2015 you saw a gap...

CHARLIE: ‘Yep. We were professional athletes and swam for Great Britain for many years, but after retiring we found ourselves surrounded by a new wave of weekend triathletes, runners and cyclists – and we could see that many of the nutritional supplements they were buying weren’t up to scratch.’

Who supported you in the early stages of setting up the business?

LEE: ‘We had amazing support from all our friends and family – everything from offering us investment to just helping us to pack boxes – all of which allowed us to keep pushing the business forward until we secured our first round of investment in June 2018.’

In what other ways were you given backing?

LEE: ‘American Express really helped us with the practical side of things when we first set up the business. They supported us by helping us sort out our cashflow. We needed to recoup revenue before having to pay for outgoings like product stock and website costs. American Express gave us their backing so we could manage our business better.’

What are the biggest trends you’ve seen since starting up?

LEE: ‘Vegetarianism, veganism and all-natural products going mainstream. Our biggest flagship product when we launched was our vegan product which has since gone from strength to strength.’

How do you back others in and around the business?

LEE: ‘Ethics and social sustainability are big for us, whether that’s in our

Neat Nutrition
neat-nutrition.com

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packaging and recyclable materials or the jobs we create within our own business. But we also look at backing from a community perspective – for example, by giving a percentage of profit from every bag sold to SportsAid, which supports young athletes who perhaps don’t have the financial opportunities to pursue their sport. It starts at home. If you look after your team in an ethical, sustainable way, you can scale up from there.’

● neat-nutrition.com



AMERICAN EXPRESS MEANS BUSINESS

American Express understands that you can get more out of life and business if you have someone standing behind you.

Whether that’s practically, by helping small businesses manage their finances, by providing peace of mind with 24 hour customer service, or just by being a source of helpful advice and inspiration.

Whatever your passion, whether it’s your smallest need or biggest ambition, American Express has your back.

If you’re in need of some inspiration or there’s a problem you need help solving, then the Shop Small hub from American Express has plenty of tips, insights and information to help your business thrive.
Search: Shop Small



PECKHAM

*Bellenden Road
and beyond*

NEIGHBOURHOOD:

Peckham’s transformation into a go-to destination for young creatives has made it one of the most aesthetically varied, culturally mixed and unique places in London. The streets surrounding Rye Lane and Bellenden Road are some of the most popular in the area, treading a happy line between exclusive and egalitarian; buzzing go-to galleries, bars and restaurants operating alongside the kinds of long-standing businesses that gave the area its character in the first place. Here’s a small selection of some the best.

Photographs by Jason Lowe



Flock and Herd

• 155 Bellenden Road, SE15 4DH

In recent years, the increase in meat-free lifestyles and consumer mindfulness has meant independent butcheries have had to up their game. Opened on Bellenden Road in 2012 by Charlie Shaw, formerly of Ginger Pig, Flock and Herd is no different: the team prepare whole free-range animals on-site, producing a number of items including porchetta and bacon alongside their sausages - ensuring that nothing is wasted. Flock and Herd source its animals from some of the best farms across the UK and are the only butchery in London to supply lamb from Devon's Otter Valley Farm.



'Wild garlic is just coming back into season,' says butcher and general manager Lyle Wheeler. 'For spring, we'll start using it in our spiced pork and gluten-free sausages.'





No two frames are ever the same. 'In fact,' says Everett, 'I enjoy the unconventional. Feel free to come in and ask for something hexagonal. Frames don't have to be square. And no project is too big or too small.'



The Framing Room

• Unit 1, 1A Philip Walk, SE15 3NH

At his bespoke framing shop just south of Peckham Rye, Jacob Everett and his two-strong team produce around 40 frames a week. Clients range from individuals walking in off the street to the William Morris Gallery and Tate Britain – for whom they've produced large-scale frames for works by some of the great pre-Raphaelites such as Edward Burne-Jones. Everett grew up in nearby New Cross and says Peckham is a special place to start a company because of the friendly and lively dynamic between all of the local businesses. 'A lot of my schoolmates have started their own small businesses in the area and we all support and help each other out,' says Everett.



Steamer

• 8 Rye Lane, SE15 4RY

Qin He and her husband moved to London around 13 years ago from south China. They both worked in Chinatown making dumplings and dim sum before starting their own business, Steamer, four years ago. The Chinese street-food kiosk, located between Peckham Rye Station and Rye Lane, serves Chinese BBQ pork buns and prawn stir-fry noodles among other popular dishes which people queue up seven days a week for.



'We're looking to change our menu soon to include more sushi and cold dishes,' says Qin He. 'We want to start serving more salads with ingredients like black fungus, seaweed and cucumber.'



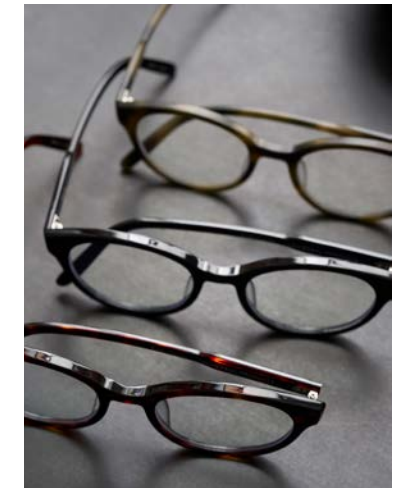


Alpha Shadows is the only place in London to stock Norbit by Hiroshi Nozawa. 'Soon we'll have one of the brand's fishing jackets in stock,' says Piercy. 'It has oversized pockets and is mixed with quite a technical type of nylon. It's a really modern take on heritage.'



NEIGHBOURHOOD:

PECKHAM



Alpha Shadows

• C1, Bussey Building, 133 Copeland Road, SE15 3SN



Alpha Shadows likes doing things its own way. The store is hidden away on the first floor of Peckham's Bussey Building and, for customers who don't know it's there, it can be pretty hard to find. Inside there's an oasis of clothing brands from South Korea and the US, but most are from Japan, including Eastlogue, Niuhaus and Fujito. 'Around 90% of our brands are Japanese,' says founder Tom Piercy, 'some of which you almost definitely won't see anywhere else outside of Japan. While I don't exclusively look for hard-to-find brands, they definitely appeal to customers.' When Piercy founded the store in 2015, he wanted to make it as different as possible from other independent fashion retailers. 'Because the store is in Peckham, which for some people living north of the river is out of the way, the product has to be a bit special to make people want to come here.'



‘Over spring, we’ll be making more of our special pizzas with potato and Italian pork and fennel sausage, which we get from Flock and Herd, directly across the road,’ says Sandeman.



Made of Dough

• 182 Bellenden Road, SE15 4BW



After a two-year pop-up residency in the shipping containers that make up Pop Brixton, Made of Dough opened its first bricks and mortar spot on Bellenden Road in 2015. Interiors are airy, with a stylish marble bar. ‘We took over a pizza restaurant that wasn’t working and persuaded the owners to let us take the site off them but keep the equipment,’ says Ed Sandeman, who is one of three founders. ‘None of us were chefs,’ he goes on. ‘But I’m second-generation Spanish, and one of the other founders is second-generation Italian. We simply thought, if we combined the kinds of food we love from our upbringing and made one perfect thing, it would be pizza.’ Made of Dough’s signature pizzas are made with a simple lean dough recipe using a 60-hour fermentation process and topped with the best produce, which is often sourced locally. ‘The people round here like to support local business,’ says Sandeman, ‘so we try to stick to that ethos ourselves.’

A DAY WELL SPENT

Peckham is having a moment. Packed with small, characterful independent businesses, and with a vibrant, village-like vibe, it makes shopping fun - and even more so when you know that you get rewarded for purchases made on your American Express Card®. So, next time you’re buying that amazing dry-aged sirloin at Flock and Herd and a bottle of natural wine from General Store for dinner with friends, remember that you’ll be getting even more for your everyday spending. If that’s piqued your interest, then read on to see how one Cardmember was able to earn rewards whilst browsing her favourite local merchants on Bellenden Road.



SHOP WITH AMERICAN EXPRESS THIS SPRING

Whether you use your Card on Bellenden Road or at the shops near you, American Express can help you get more from your everyday spending.

As a Cardmember, you could earn rewards on your morning coffee, evening meal and everything else in between. What’s more, with American Express Invites® you can create new memories with access to some of the best seats in the house for concerts, theatre shows and movies.

As a Cardmember you’ll also enjoy special offers on the brands you love from the everyday to the not so everyday. So next time you’re shopping in and around your local neighbourhood, make sure you use your American Express Card and you’ll get rewarded for shopping small.

For inspiration and tips on where you can shop small in your local area. Search: Shop Small

Neighbourhood

Peckham

In partnership with American Express



10am COFFEE AND CROISSANT

‘I like to start my day at General Store, where I’ll usually order a coffee and pastry to kick off my morning. This is also a great place to pick up groceries such as fresh pasta, condiments and wine, perfect for when I’m throwing a dinner party for friends.’

2pm JACKET REQUIRED

‘My boyfriend is looking for a jacket to wear to my friend’s birthday dinner tonight, so we head a couple of doors down to Form SE15, which has a great range of both men and women’s clothing and accessories. I find that staying local is a much more relaxed way to browse for clothes than going into town, and the staff are so helpful and knowledgeable - it’s definitely one of my favourite go-to places.’



7.30pm BIRTHDAY TREAT

‘Tonight, we’re celebrating my friend’s birthday over some Thai street food at our amazing neighbourhood restaurant, The Begging Bowl. As a treat, her boyfriend is surprising her with flights to India which will make her evening as it’s been on her wish list for years! Hope they pick me up a souvenir.’

11pm GOING FOR A SONG

‘It’s been so great to see everyone again and we decide we need to make a solid plan for our next reunion. We’re all avid fans of The Who - so booking tickets to see them this summer at Wembley is a no-brainer!’

ON OUR *Radar*

Our roundup of four UK businesses to have on your radar this spring – from an innovative hotel with a coffee shop but no reception and a waste-free restaurant run by a cocktail guru, to a mother-and-daughter plant shop and an adventure-inspired café built by a former oil and gas engineer.

Photographs by Thom Atkinson

ON OUR RADAR



01 | Forest

Arch 133 Deptford Market Yard, London

Growing up

A VISIT TO Forest, where the shelves of its East Dulwich and Deptford stores spill over with exotic ferns, ivy and jungle climbers, shows how indoor plants have become big business.

Forest is owned and operated by mother-and-daughter team Fran and Alice Bailey, who started the company in 2013 as a spin-off from Fran's original floristry business, The Fresh Flower Company.

'I opened Forest just one street down from our East Dulwich flower shop,' says Fran. 'Originally the space was used as a combined flower workshop and plant shop. I had noticed that the popularity of houseplants was on the rise again, and soon the plants took over and the florist had to move out!'



In addition to house plants, Forest's store in Deptford sells homeware and accessories from brands such as Dassie and Nkuku



INDOOR PLANTS

What's in...

Swiss cheese plant
Fiddle-leaf fig
Chinese money plant

On the out...

Gardenias
Autumn ferns
Azaleas

The selection at Forest has since grown beyond plants to include homeware, beauty and lifestyle products – Aesop and Nkuku among them – along with craft classes in candle-making, flower arranging, macramé, terrarium building and calligraphy.

Fran's passion and DNA runs through the business. 'I grew up on a cut-flower nursery where, as a child, I often worked with my brothers, helping out in the greenhouses,' she explains. 'My parents encouraged my love of horticulture, but I never expected my daughters to join my business. I am so glad of our collaboration – they've brought a fresh perspective to the business and been instrumental in our expansion, finding unusual plants, sourcing new brands and spotting trends.'

The success of Forest tallies with that of other thriving plant shops in London and other cities, as a new generation of urban dwellers seek a green fix, possibly as an antidote to living among concrete and the pressures of the digital age.

'Houseplants make us happier and healthier,' affirms Fran. 'Science shows they purify the air in our homes, lift our mood and reduce stress levels.'

A visit to the Forest stores feels serene, and is as much about getting design and lifestyle inspiration as it is a retail experience, with staff on hand to give advice and many customers converting to workshop attendees.

'People want to learn how to display and care for their plants, how to propagate to increase their stock and watch them thrive,' says Fran. 'Knowing about our plants increases our enjoyment of them.'

● forest.london

HOW TO:
Pot a plant

Forest's top 3 tips for a healthy indoor potted plant



1

Buy a potting mix. You can get a soil mixture from a store which should include fertiliser, peat moss and organic soil.



2

Assign one plant per pot to avoid overcrowding. Make sure you choose a plant that doesn't need too much sunshine.



3

Fill the pot to about an inch from the top, and lightly press down the soil to eliminate any air pockets. Water regularly.



02 | Cub

153 Hoxton Street, London

Force of nature

When Ryan Chetiyawardana joined forces with Doug McMaster, the owner and chef of zero-waste Brighton restaurant Silo, the result was a dining experience like no other - big on flavour and sustainable credentials.

LONDON COCKTAIL GURU Ryan Chetiyawardana is known for constantly evolving his businesses. After first making his name with White Lyan (now Super Lyan, relocated to Amsterdam) and then Dandelyan, which gained top honours at The World's 50 Best Bars 2018, Cub was launched just over a year ago in the heart of Hoxton as a 'drinks-led dining experience' that is strong on sustainability and experimentation.

Even in fast-paced London, Chetiyawardana's enthusiasm for change is astonishing, but so far, the much-lauded Cub - and his collaboration with McMaster - appears set to continue. We caught up with Chetiyawardana to talk sustainability and how the pair came together to create their cocktail restaurant.



Doug McMaster plates up a dish from that night's set menu, Abalones Mushroom made with Sprouted Grains and a Toast Ale sauce.



Chef Doug McMaster is the master-mind behind Cub's waste-free menu.



“We wanted to show that people can have a great time, have a wonderful product, *and* do good for the environment.”



Silo in Brighton was the UK's first zero-waste restaurant, and the setting for a meeting of minds between Ryan and Doug.



What's the most surprising thing about dining at Cub?

‘A lot of the conversations around sustainability are very heavy, and often preachy. We wanted to show that people can have a great time, have a wonderful product *and* do good for the environment. I think a lot of people are surprised that it's veggie and accidentally vegan most of the time, too.’

How did you and Doug come to work together?

‘White Lyan and Silo opened very close together, and Doug and I were suddenly thrust into the same circles (and articles) discussing waste. But I had actually been following Doug's work since he was in Australia. When I took the Lyan team down for the first Christmas party, Silo blew us away, and Doug was clearly an exceptional spirit. When we did our Wine Not Wine pop-up in 2014, it was an obvious choice to pair with him, and we've been friends since. When it came to discussing Cub, it was only with Doug in mind.’

Have you noticed an uptick in diners' interest in provenance in recent years?

‘Hugely so! It's wonderful to see the rise in interest across the board. I think in recent years people have started to demand more information and au-

thenticity... Conscientious practice doesn't need to be about sacrifice, and people are now able to buy with a much better conscience while still getting delicious, honest and exciting things.’

Is doing things sustainably a thread through all you do?

‘It's always been important to me personally, and it was certainly a guiding pillar of the business. We're not perfect, and there are some parts where we're yet to explore it more thoroughly, but it's certainly inherent to our outlook.’

What are some of the key challenges of setting those kind of standards for yourself?

‘There are a lot of established systems that are easy to blindly accept, but asking the questions and demanding a better approach forces some amazing changes. It's also important not to punish yourself along the way if you're not meeting your goals as quickly as you hoped - every little change helps.’

Is there any food that's impossible to match a drink to?

‘I'm yet to find one!’

● lyancub.com





03 | Spoke & Stringer

Unit 1, Lime Kiln Rd, Bristol

Making waves

Kristian Crews opened Spoke & Stringer in 2015. Before then he was an engineer on offshore oil and gas rigs, spending a lot of time on his own and dreaming of opening his own store one day.

Kristian Crews, owner of Spoke & Stringer, enjoys the pace of Bristol life.



BASED ON THE Bristol waterfront, Crews’ multi-purpose space brings together the things he is most passionate about - surfboards, motorcycles, pushbikes and skateboards, as well as food. ‘We say we’re a café shop based around ride culture, which covers anything from bicycles, to boards, to motorbikes,’ says Crews. ‘But you don’t have to be into it all, or even any of those things, to come in and get a nice sandwich.’ As well as the surfboards, wetsuit repair kits and bicycles, customers can browse an array of outdoor adventure brands: sweaters, hoodies, tanks, beanies and jeans from the likes of Pukas, Deus Ex Machina and Amuse Society among others.

In recent years, with its thriving food and drink scene, Bristol has proven there is culinary life outside London. So it comes as little surprise that the café, deli and restaurant are at the heart of Spoke & Stringer, which uses fresh and locally sourced ingredients. There’s good coffee, an award-winning brunch, pastries and pasties baked daily and San Sebastián-inspired pintxos in the evening. On why he decided to set up his brand in Bristol, Crews says: ‘I can go surfing within an hour, or be in the hills in 10 minutes, and can still get to London easily.’ spokeandstringer.com

04 | The Pilgrm

25 London Street, London

Pilgrm’s progress

The Pilgrm is one of the most original hotels to have opened in London in recent years, the result of a collaboration between owners Jason Catifeoglu, formerly of Zetter Townhouse, Steph Thrasyvoulou and his father Andreas, founder of My Hotels.



VISITORS TO THE PILGRM hotel in Paddington are greeted with a coffee shop, simple entry without a check-in - and a 200-year-old mahogany staircase. ‘When I was opening this hotel I had this sense that I wanted to do things very differently, challenge the way traditional hotels operate,’ says Jason. ‘I knew it was possible to create something very sustainable, very design conscious, but with a lot of integrity in the way it’s done; for example, how materials are sourced and where they are from.’ Clearly, design matters. The royal-blue coffee cups match the tiles on the outside of the building. The interior feels playful yet respectful of the building’s heritage: the original parquet flooring

↑ The Pilgrm’s lounge area, where guests and visitors alike can enjoy a flat white from Workshop Coffee.



“For us it’s about creating the space and letting people fill that how they want.”



and other period features have been restored, set against an eclectic mix of contemporary artworks.

Formerly an upmarket early Victorian townhouse, the building had been a run-down two-star B&B when The Pilgrm team took over, and needed a substantial restoration. The founders enlisted Tim Hubbard of Sheffield-based design firm 93ft, who unearthed material and vintage fixtures and fittings from all over the UK – including a water fountain that once stood in the Natural History Museum. Upcycling, utilising British craftsmanship and employing as many original materials as possible from the UK were also important parts of the design process.

The joy of The Pilgrm is in what’s gone into the detail, but also what’s been left out. There are no phones, televisions, minibars, tea- and coffee-making facilities or air-conditioning in the rooms, with guests checking in online prior to arrival.

‘The more you pull on that thread, the more you realise just how much extraneous stuff there really is in hotels,’ says Thrasyvoulou. ‘Lose that



GO FOR...

Breakfast and brunch: An unfussy menu, made up of locally sourced ingredients and cold press juices.

Coffee: Every year, Workshop Coffee spend a few months in East Africa, South and Central America working with some of the world’s best coffee farmers to source their coffee. Once it’s back, they roast it in Bethnal Green.

Cocktails: The bar is a small but glamorous space of velvet upholstery and vintage furnishings, serving recipes supplied by some of the world’s best bars.

Value: The 73 rooms come in Bunk, Small, Medium and Large, all under £200, and many a lot less than that.

The location: The Norfolk Square address is around the corner from Paddington station, close to all the food, drink and nightlife around nearby King’s Cross and the new developments there.

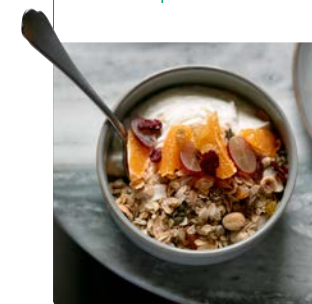
Steph Thrasyvoulou (left) and Jason Catifeoglu (right) opened The Pilgrm together in November 2017.



and you can reappropriate your attention on things people really do value, like a great mattress, sustainability, super-fast wifi or the materiality of the room.’

‘Our guests are people who love less faff,’ agrees Catifeoglu. ‘There’s enough noise out there today without us putting pieces of paper in their rooms telling them what to do and when. For us it’s about creating the space and letting people fill that how they want.’

● thepilgrm.com



La Fromagerie

2-6 Moxon Street,
London
lafromagerie.co.uk

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“IN THE EARLY DAYS, IT WAS JUST A GREAT ADVENTURE...”

*Patricia Michelson on starting and growing
her cheese business in London.*

‘I FELL IN LOVE with cheese while I was skiing,’ reveals Patricia Michelson. ‘I was in Meribel, I met the local cheesemaker and ended up bringing a 38kg wheel of Beaufort back with me and storing it in my garden shed for the next 3 months! That was how this whole thing started.’

The ‘thing’ Michelson is referring to is La Fromagerie, her London-based speciality cheese business, founded 28 years ago. From humble beginnings

as a Camden Lock market stall, the business has gone from strength to strength, and is now made up of three bricks-and-mortar stores and a thriving online business that ships cheese all over the world.

The most recently opened space is in Bloomsbury – a sleek but characterful wine bar with velvet chairs, mood lighting and marble countertops – but it’s in the Marylebone store, with its huge cheese room off to the side, that

Michelson feels most at home. Here, surrounded by wooden shelves creaking with condiments, ceramics, selected pickles and preserves, she recalls the early vision that drove her.

‘I had a yearning to have a shop that was all about engaging with customers and championing small independent producers,’ she recalls. ‘You know – the places you often don’t see unless you find yourself in a mountain village or a little market somewhere. I was told I wouldn’t make it in business because I was too niche, but I really wanted customers to feel they were somewhere they could get involved and learn something.’

For the first few years Michelson worked alone, serving cheese from a table in the middle of a tiny shop in Highbury and steadily building her



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an American Express Business
customer, search: Shop Small*



network of producers across Europe and beyond. In time, having caught the attention of top restaurants and renowned chefs, she moved across the street to bigger premises.

‘In the early days, it was just a great adventure and we didn’t even consider different payment methods,’ she remembers. ‘But that changed when we moved to our Highbury shop.’ As increasing numbers of customers started to flow through the door, Michelson



knew she needed to look at her business processes and payment systems, and that’s when she started accepting American Express.

It was also the natural point to start thinking about expanding the product range, but to do this the business needed to increase its cashflow capabilities. As an American Express Business Cardmember, Michelson was able to keep cash in the business longer, which enabled her to invest in new products

to grow the business while still being able to manage company expenses.

Today, La Fromagerie stocks some 250 artisanal cheeses, along with bread, wine, fruit and vegetables, condiments and kitchenware – most of it still individually selected by Michelson at source. It’s all part of her value system: understand your product, care about its provenance and provide your customer with a deeply personal experience.

● lafromagerie.co.uk

THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME



With the arrival of Crispin, locals and corporate types alike have found a home of unpretentious, contemporary, all-day dining – a welcome haven of honest food and drink among the heavyweight office buildings of London's East End.

Photographs by Tina Hillier

CRISPIN

Founders: Dominic Hamdy & Oliver Hiam
Location: White's Row, London, E1 7NF



IF YOU WANT to make an entrance with a new restaurant in the British capital, then opening in a kite-shaped structure made of shimmering zinc and glass is a good way to go about it. 'Actually, it was supposed to represent a sail,' explains Dominic Hamdy. 'We're right next to Tenter Ground, where they used to stretch the sails for ships, and that was the original inspiration.'

Today, Hamdy and his business partner Oliver Hiam are taking five under the eaves of their striking standalone restaurant, pushing laptops and notepads aside to make space for the arrival of three flat whites.

All around us, the brunch-time buzz is starting up. At one adjacent table a noisy young group of four are making exaggerated oh-my-god gestures over an iPhone; at another a suited-up pair are peering studiously at some kind of spreadsheet laid out on the blonde wood tabletop. Over by the till, near the entrance, piles of freshly baked pastries are calling to the handful of customers awaiting takeaway coffee.



Head chef Henry Freestone preps the evening's special of crudo seabass. He'll serve it with seasonal pink radicchio and pomegranate.



“The building was intended as an offering to local residents, to be a hub - its purpose was to bring this whole area together.”

The hum isn't likely to die down any time soon. Since landing last August among the Spitalfields high-rises, Crispin has been winning fans of all stripes from breakfast through to bedtime. The draws are the cheery, airy vibe and fresh, seasonal menus built around the idea of lots of small plates and the least amount of waste possible.

Hiam and Hamdy, who also run Aldwych coffee shop Lundenwic and the hugely successful scotch-egg business Scotchtails (and DJ in whatever downtime that leaves), are currently spending a lot of time at Crispin, juggling their various commitments during the day but often staying late at night in the restaurant while they hone their all-day dining concept.

You'd think that being housed within such eye-catching architecture would deliver an inherent advantage. But while the Crispin team collaborated with building designer Sheppard Robinson on the interior - employing plenty of wood to soften up the greys and glassy surfaces, and keeping the lighting soft for a low-key Scandi vibe - they soon discovered that the complex geometry presented plenty of challenges.

‘When we agreed the lease, it was half-built and we could just see the frame,’ says Hiam. ‘I mean, we were just obsessed with the shape, but it proved to be an absolute nightmare to work with. Look at all the connections on the ceiling: nothing was allowed to be drilled in, everything had to be clamped and hung flat.’



SPRING PICKS

Crispin is all about working with what's in season. Here's what's set to star on the menu over the next couple of months...

‘We're excited for spring veg,’ says Dom. ‘That means asparagus, peas, radishes, jersey royal potatoes. Expect some really fresh and colourful dishes as we move away from wintry stews and root veg. Spring lamb and wild garlic are ones to watch out for, and rhubarb will hopefully still be going strong.’



One of the trickiest elements to resolve was the kitchen. Compact and open-plan, it's integrated into the dining area, so there was the air extraction to deal with, but also very little storage space for ingredients. Fortunately, this chimed perfectly with the pair's vision for the restaurant's food offering – a contemporary menu with plenty of Mediterranean influences.

'Because of the nature of the building and the fact we haven't got much space, all the food is really fresh,' says Hamdy. 'Our menus might appear quite small, but this way we can keep it super seasonal, using the space that we've got.'

The kitchen is the domain of head chef Henry Freestone, who is inventive with ingredients that are sourced as locally as possible, whether it's Secret Smokehouse salmon, Dusty Knuckle bread, fruit and veg from Notoora, or meat from Hammersmith butcher HG Walter. Rather than working up a quarterly menu of 30 dishes, he creates a flexible weekly menu of only seven items – say, pork rib-eye with red pepper and hazelnuts, or buffalo ricotta and spinach ravioli – and works hard to synergise the day and evening kitchens. There's an option for 'one of everything' for dinner, and an emphasis on sharing.

DINNER MUSIC

When he's not at the restaurant, Oliver Hiam can be found behind the decks. Here he gave us six of his favourite background beats, currently on heavy rotation at Crispin.

+ Tabu	Vânia Bastos
+ Caught Up	Metro Area
+ Dog It	Digable Planets
+ Say You Love Me	Om Alex Khaoli
+ Something About Us	Daft Punk
+ Mind Games	Stimela

“ Our menus might appear quite small, but this way we can keep it super seasonal, using the space that we’ve got.”





Dom and Oliver take a break from office admin to sample a new delivery of biodynamic wines from one of their producers.

“We’re focused on building a sustainable business that people enjoy rather than rolling out and selling a concept.”

‘We try to limit wastage as much as possible,’ says Hiam. ‘If there are carrots on the dinner menu, there’ll be carrots in the sandwiches or soup at lunch, so you’re not using too much fridge space.’

The pair are passionate, too, about their wine list, which is strong on natural, low-intervention and biodynamic wines from smaller producers (see box).

‘We’re treading a line between this super-progressive, radical, natural vibe, and the more classical clean-drinking wines that some people are more accustomed to,’ explains Hiam. ‘Part of being good at selling the wine is judging what customers like; we often give them a taste and get them involved in the process, and that’s when they get on board.’

‘In the end, the pillars we’re pushing are the same as a lot of new restaurants: seasonality and provenance. People want to know where their meat and bread comes from; you can ask us where any of our produce and ingredients originate and we can tell you. And we’re proud of that.’



WINES TO TRY

The Crispin team are passionate about low-intervention wines. We asked for three of their top picks right now.

• **2016 Schmitt ‘Natur’ Müller-Thurgau, Rheinhessen (Germany)**

A completely unfiltered wine made by a pair of young producers, Bianka and Daniel Schmitt, at their family-owned biodynamic winery in the Rhine Valley. Some skin contact gives this wine remarkable texture, balancing its strong character and fruity acidity.

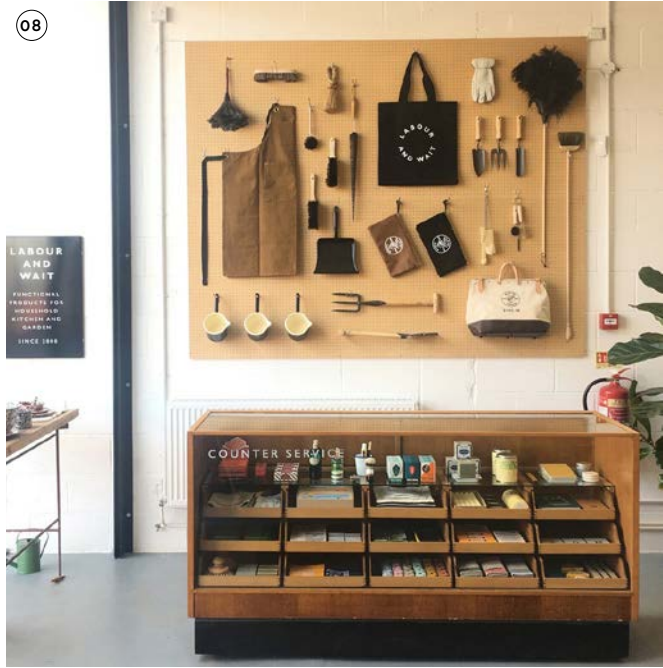
• **2016 Weninger ‘Rózsá Petsovits’ Rosé, Sopron (Hungary)**

Direct pressing of syrah grapes has resulted in soft red fruits with a long, juicy finish. There are some great wines coming out of Hungary and this rosé, named after producer Franz Weninger’s grandmother, is a perfect example. Complex, refined and highly drinkable.

• **2017 Bodegas y Viñedos La Senda ‘1984’, Camponaraya (Spain)**

Radical producer Diego Losada is a big fan of George Orwell – so much so that he named this biodynamic wine after Orwell’s novel. This was also the year the vines were first planted. A fantastic, juicy, yet well balanced wine made with 100 per cent indigenous mencia grapes.





The round up

A selection of some of our favourite stockists.

01. Allpress Café
58 Redchurch Street, E2 7DP

02. Dawson Flowers
43 Lamb's Conduit Street, WC1N 3NG

03. Hoxton Holborn
199-206 High Holborn, WC1V 7BD

04. Huckle the Barber
55 Lamb's Conduit Street, Holborn, WC1N 3NB

05. Brickwood and Bread
21-23 Tooting High Street, SW17 0SN

06. Rough Trade West
130 Talbot Road, W11 1JA

07. Town Hall Hotel
Patriot Square, E2 9NF

08. Labour and Wait
85 Redchurch Street, E2 7DJ

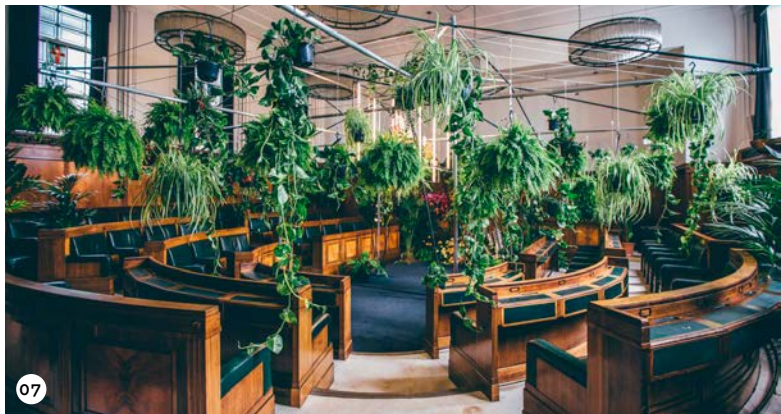
09. House of Cans
Unit 116, Stable Street, N1C 4DR

10. Franklins Farm Shop
155 Lordship Lane, SE22 8HX

11. Diogenes the Dog
96 Rodney Rd, London SE17 1BG

12. Goodhood Store
151 Curtain Road, EC2A 3QE

13. Couverture and Garbstore
188 Kensington Park Road, W11 2ES



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We would love to hear your thoughts on this magazine. Visit the link below to take part in this short survey:

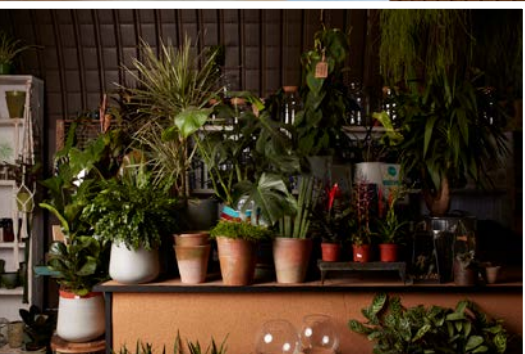
<http://bit.ly/shopsmallsurvey>



Crispin



La Fromagerie



Forest

T&Cs: UK entrants aged 18+ only. No purchase necessary. Internet access required. Use the link above to complete the survey and submit your details between 18/04/19 – 17/05/19 for an entry into the prize draw.

Prizes: 2 winners will each win 1 x £50 voucher for Forest London, Crispin and La Fromagerie, total of £150. Max 1 entry per person. See the Survey website for full T&Cs and Prize details. Promoter: Courier Holdings Ltd.

Important Information:

Neat Nutrition and La Fromagerie:

American Express offers a variety of Business Cards. For a Card with no annual fee, rewards or other features, the Basic Business Card is available. Terms and conditions apply. For more information, search Why Amex Business.

Neighbourhood:

Rewards vary by product. Terms and conditions apply. Subject to availability.

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