

WINTER 2022

FESTIVITIES
What's on and
where to go

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Victoria

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WINTER

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Berkeley Square House,
Berkeley Square, London, W1J 6BD
020 7259 1053 www.pubbiz.com

Editor Alice Cairns 020 7259 1058
alice@pubbiz.com

Editor at large Jonathan Whiley
020 7259 1057
jonathan@pubbiz.com

Writers Corrie Bond-French,
Will Moffitt, Kate White

Sub-editor Kate White

Designer Andy Lowe

Circulation manager
Julie Ward

Advertisement managers

Bridget Rodricks
bridget@pubbiz.com 07769 331 599

Richard Taylor
richard@pubbiz.com 07831 338 162

Publisher Adrian Day
day@pubbiz.com 020 7259 1053

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Victoria BID

22A St James's Square,
St James's,
London, SW1Y 4JH
020 3872 7183
www.victoriabid.co.uk

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All the latest news, including
memorials to Her Majesty
and a major refurbishment
at Dolphin Square



The London Heritage Quarter recently commemorated the life of Queen Elizabeth II with a series of memorial boards.

Located in foyers, shop windows, behind tills and at Tube stations, the boards celebrated the Queen's 70-year reign and thanked her for a lifetime of service.

At the same time, cleaning teams and Victoria BID ambassadors worked around the clock to support the unprecedented influx of mourners into the area.



Cosmetics brand Lush has reopened its store in Victoria Station after a major refurbishment.

The reimaged space features repurposed furniture, a new shop design and a dedicated consultation area to match customers with their perfect product. All full-size plastic packaging can be returned to the store in exchange for 50p off your next purchase.

Unit 42b, Buckingham Palace Road

Westminster Fire Station has unveiled a new duplex apartment overlooking a courtyard that was previously used as the fire engine turning circle.

With decor inspired by 1980s Miami and old Hollywood, the apartment boasts three bedrooms, a 24-hour concierge and access to Mathura, Atul Kochhar's on-site restaurant. It's one of 17 apartments located within the Grade II-listed Edwardian fire station. *4 Greycoat Place*



Eighty years since the first residents called it home, **Dolphin Square** is undergoing a major restoration.

The project aims to ramp up the environmental credentials of the square, with all 6,000 windows replaced in order to boost energy efficiency. The spa, swimming pool and health club will all be refurbished, and new amenities and services will be added. The project is expected to be complete by 2029. *dsqrestoration.co.uk*



Get ready for Christmas with

THE BEST ADVENT CALENDARS



FOR SPARKLE

Discover 12 pieces of celestial-themed Oliver Bonas jewellery in your choice of silver or gold. Each piece comes with a velvet pouch for safe keeping. *£275, Unit 49, Victoria Station*

FOR SWEET TREATS



This indulgent advent calendar from Hotel Chocolat includes festive slabs, truffles, beauty products, tipples and sachets of creamy hot chocolate. *£75, 133 Victoria Street*

FOR BEAUTIFUL DESIGN

A limited-edition collaboration between Biscuiteers and Sophie Conran, with 24 pockets for festive iced biscuits. *£135, 14-15 Eccleston Yards*



FOR TRADITION

Open up a new picture every day with this exclusive advent calendar from Westminster Abbey. Behind each window you'll discover glorious stained glass designs. *£6.95, 20 Dean's Yard*





Fill your diary with these festive events

Christmas crackers

Christmas is nearly here, and there's no better place to celebrate than in Victoria and Westminster...



FROM NOVEMBER 1

Biscuiteers will be holding festive afternoon teas in its Eccleston Yards icing café. Inspired by the flavours of Christmas, you'll sample the likes of spiced honey and fig cake, white chocolate and cranberry macarons, and signature hand-iced biscuits.

NOVEMBER 25

Visit Victoria Street, Christchurch Gardens and Whitehall to see the twinkling Christmas lights, which will be switched on overnight on November 23 and 24.

DECEMBER 6-8

Eccleston Yards will transform into a hub of festive crafting. On December 6 at 12pm -1.30pm, you can enjoy festive biscuit decoration hosted by Biscuiteers.

On December 7 from 12pm-1.30pm, Masterpeace will host a wreath-making workshop, and on December 8 at the same venue and time, you can enjoy a bauble-making masterclass.

FROM DECEMBER 8

A Festive Wish Tree is due to appear in Victoria Station, with passers-by encouraged to write notes and wishes for their loved ones and hang them from its boughs. From December 8-11, Santa's little helper's will be on hand to assist you.



ARE YOU DUE A LEGAL MOT?

William Sturges solicitors help you and your business get your legal documents in order.
Martin Donoghue explains how



Running a business can be difficult at the best of times. There are so many demands on your time, and so many details to cover. One of those challenges is legal regulation. It is more effective in terms of time, effort, and money to ensure your business is legally compliant and that your documentation is fit for purpose rather than dealing with legal pitfalls after the event and trying to rectify them. Get your legal documents right, and you will be off to a good start. Keeping them up to date will keep you ahead of the game.

This is why law firm William Sturges is offering a Legal MOT for a fixed fee – a fast and efficient way to review your business' legal documents, protect your business and identify potential issues before they arise.

Documents that should be covered in the MOT are:

- For companies, Articles of Association and Shareholders' Agreements – the company's and its shareholders' internal rule books.

- For any business, its trading terms, and conditions of business.
- Data protection policies to guard against ICO fines.
- Website policies about its use, particularly important with the advent of new online safety laws due to be introduced.
- Documents protecting your intellectual property.
- Staff and contractor contracts and policies.

Following the Legal MOT, solicitors at William Sturges will highlight where improvements need to be made and any other issues you should be aware of. You can then decide if you wish to make those amendments for an additional fee.

Make sure you pass your Legal MOT with flying colours. William Sturges' commercial team are proactive and practical, bringing with them a wealth of experience that can help benefit your business.



Contact Martin Donoghue on
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martin.donoghue@williamsturges.co.uk
for a fixed fee Legal MOT quote tailored
to your business needs.

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Winter warmers

From engaging exhibitions to cosy workshops and Christmas carols, Victoria is full of heartwarming activities this winter

BY WILL MOFFITT



Hannah Quinlan and Rosie Hastings

SPACED OUT

Hannah Quinlan and Rosie Hastings turn razor sharp social commentary into elegant works of art.

The duo explore power dynamics, class and social relations in *Tulips*, an exhibition at Tate Britain that is on until May 2023. You'll find deeply thoughtful works that probe and question topics such as architecture and public spaces, gender and sexual identity, and how the places we spend time in ultimately come to define us.

Millbank, [tate.org.uk](https://www.tate.org.uk)



Tulips
∞

WORDS OF WISDOM

Delivered every year at Westminster Abbey since 1966, the One People Oration has sought to encourage listeners to "think not only of all Christian people but of all mankind". Themed around the topic of "ethical leadership: human rights at the heart of response", this year's oration will be delivered by UN deputy high commissioner for human rights Nada Al-Nashif on November 22.

The abbey is also hosting a number of Christmas services to celebrate advent and the birth of Jesus Christ. From liturgies and meditations to lessons and carols, the space is open to visitors throughout late November and December. The first service (an advent liturgy) takes place on November 27 promising a dramatic, candlelit hour of hymns, readings and anthems sung by the abbey choir. *Dean's Yard, [westminster-abbey.org](https://www.westminster-abbey.org)*



CRAFT SOME CALM

Find a moment of calm in the busy winter months and learn a new skill while you're at it by attending a workshop at the MasterPeace studio.

With a crop of classes to choose from – including winter wildlife watercolour painting, candle-making and bauble-making – MasterPeace caters to a broad range of tastes and interests. You can even make your own wreath on November 26 and December 3 and 10, just in time for Christmas.

12 Eccleston Yards, masterpeace.studio



FESTIVE FUN

One for readers with small children, St Peter's Church has organised a Christmas arts and crafts baking fair on November 27, taking place from 3-5pm.

The church also offers a range of services throughout the week, including three services each Sunday morning: a holy communion at 8.15am, family eucharist at 9.45am and sung eucharist with a choir at 11.15am.

Eaton Square, stpetereatonsquare.co.uk

DICKENSIAN DELIGHTS

Mark Gatiss stars as Jacob Marley alongside Nicholas Farrell as Scrooge in a retelling of *A Christmas Carol*.

Marrying masterful Dickensian storytelling with modern day special effects, this irrepressible tale is macabre, gripping and just as relevant as it was 179 years ago. Filmed live during the 2021 stage run at Alexandra Palace Theatre, prepare to be frightened and delighted as this supernatural Victorian world is transported to the big screen, from November 27 at Curzon Victoria.

58 Victoria Street, curzon.com



Former Blue Peter presenter and travel writer Valerie Singleton will be at the Kids for Kids Candlelit Christmas Concert at St Peter's Church, Eaton Square on December 1

BY ALICE CAIRNS



Why do you support Kids for Kids?

I am most of all impressed in life by people who get up and do things. We all say, 'Oh God, isn't that awful, look at that terrible famine.' But some people get up off the sofa and do something about it, and Patricia [Parker, Kids for Kids founder] is one of those people.

Is this a difficult time to be a child?

It's an absolutely horrendous time to be a child. How on earth you manage as a parent trying to monitor social media, I cannot imagine.

What was your own childhood like?

I moved around a lot because my dad was in the RAF. My schooling was absolutely awful! I got very bored and I don't suppose the teachers liked me very much. I often wonder whether I could have been much brighter in different circumstances.

Tell me about Blue Peter.

It was an amazing time, one of the best in my life. I loved the travelling, and I loved dressing up because I trained as an actress. I liked being out

on location much more than being in the studio. I had a great friendship with John [Noakes] and Pete [Purves], and now whenever I visit London I stay with Janet Ellis, who was on the show at a completely different time to me!

What do you do for fun?

I'm a bit of a news junkie, and news is fairly constant now, so it's very difficult to switch it off. It doesn't feel responsible to disconnect from it.

The world's not in a good place.

Your favourite travel destinations?

I've been all over the world thanks to my travel writing – I love getting in my car, driving off and exploring. Scotland is beautiful in terms of scenery. I found South Korea fascinating

and I love Alaska in the winter. I always like rather remote places. I'm not good with steamy places – anywhere where I drip constantly doesn't terribly appeal.

The Candlelit Christmas Concert raises money for the children of Darfur, Sudan. Visit kidsforkids.org.uk





Hearology Brings Harley Street To The Heart Of Victoria - Without The Price Tag

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Hearology®
We're All Ears

In 1956, conductor Leslie Head founded an orchestra with a difference. The Kensington Symphony Orchestra was composed, not of professional musicians, but of exceptional amateurs, who gave up their free time to hone their craft and perform in prestigious venues to the very highest standard.

More than 60 years later, the KSO is still flourishing. The orchestra performs six concerts a year, including sold-out shows at St John's Smith Square and an annual performance with the children at Pimlico Academy. Members, many of whom are local residents, meet and rehearse at the Grey Coat Hospital School and other venues in the area.

"You get a fantastic sense of community in the orchestra," says contrabassoon player Krispin Allum, who lives in Westminster. "Everyone makes the effort because we know we're making something special together, working as one team. In the woodwind section we're even breathing as one!"

The KSO is known for two things: for the exceptional quality of its performances and for its willingness to take on unusual, ambitious, or unjustly neglected music.

Orchestral manoeuvres

The Kensington Symphony Orchestra, based in Victoria, is often called the best non-professional orchestra in the UK. We find out more

BY ALICE CAIRNS



© Tom Lovatt

"The repertoire is remarkable," explains Pimlico-based violinist Zara Wright. "I don't see many professional orchestras playing some of the pieces that KSO have on their upcoming roster."

Highlights of the orchestra's programme include pieces by as many British female composers as possible, the London premiere of Dvorak's opera *Dimitrij*, and the world premieres of several pieces written specifically for the orchestra, including Matthew Taylor's *Symphony No 4*.

"I have spoken to members of professional orchestras who have told me that they wish they could play what we play," says violinist Ria Hopkinson. "They have to keep their audience happy, whereas we have the freedom to devise our own programmes and to experiment."

The KSO's much-loved music director and conductor is Russell Keable, whose 40 year-anniversary with the orchestra will be celebrated in 2023.

"The better the orchestra is, the better the conductor has to be," says Russell. "My role is to be endlessly bullying, encouraging and persuading, to have a very clear vision of what I'm expecting and to draw the orchestra along with me – especially on a Thursday evening when they're all a bit tired and would quite like to go straight to the pub, thank you very much!"

"The UK is a country that has nurtured amateur talent in music since before the 18th century, much more so than continental Europe, but even so, the word 'amateur' has come to mean something less than top notch. That is not the case with KSO. I've conducted amateur orchestras all around the country, and KSO is singular and exceptional."

In order to perform the requisite six concerts a year, every member of KSO is required to put in a huge amount of work – both by attending weekly rehearsals and by learning and practising complex pieces of music in their free time.

"These are high-powered professionals in their own spheres, so giving up the time to learn how to play the first horn part of a Mahler symphony is no small ask," says Russell. The fact that they all do so is testament to the important role that the orchestra plays in their lives – both as a creative outlet and as a community.

"KSO is a very, very special thing," Russell explains. "When we first played together after the pandemic, many people were in tears. It was just so incredibly moving and showed how very much people had missed being able to play with each other. It's a vitally important part of our spiritual life as much as anything else."

Ria agrees. "KSO is genuinely the most important thing in my life, because every Thursday Russell teaches me how to play better, both technically and musically, and he brings the life and the soul and the humanity out of the music. You learn about life from playing like that, and then from learning how to communicate it to an audience. It's just that special."

kso.org.uk

"When we
first played
together after
the pandemic,
many people
were in
tears"

Russell Keable

© Sim Canetty-Clarke



Checking in

CitizenM has opened a new high-tech hotel in Victoria.
We meet general manager Francesco Laera

BY ALICE CAIRNS

Grand, historic, contemporary and cutting edge, Victoria and its surroundings are crammed with great hotels. The latest addition to this hospitality hotspot is CitizenM, a hotel that offers luxury stays with a high-tech twist.

So how does it work? Before you visit, you're encouraged to download the CitizenM app. This nifty platform can be used to manage almost every aspect of your stay, including checking in, ordering food, making payments and even controlling the coloured mood lights in your room. The app also provides an extensive list of local recommendations including activities, restaurants and attractions, as well as perks like discounts on bike rentals and food.

So far, so futuristic – but even the most dedicated digital nomad can see the value of a little face-to-face contact with knowledgeable staff. That's no problem, according to general manager Francesco Laera: with the app handling all the boring details, hotel staff are freed up to have more meaningful interactions with guests.

"The hotel gets most of its signature personality from our staff, known as the ambassadors," Francesco says. "They are usually hired from outside of the hospitality industry, chosen first for their attitude – not skills – and put through a six-week immersion course to learn all about CitizenM's unique culture. They are completely trained to carry out all tasks – from shaking cocktails and making coffee to helping guests."

The aim is to create a guest experience that has an organic, "non-scripted" feel. Ambassadors are selected for their warm personalities and their love of multitasking, and they're rewarded with unlimited hotel stays and free food from the

on-site restaurant during their shifts. The result is a happy, bubbly team motivated to go above and beyond to give you a great stay.

The design of CitizenM is also calculated to create a fun and homely feel – think open-plan spaces, fully stocked bookshelves, superfast free wifi and a selection of iMacs available for guests to use. Founder Rattan Chadha is a contemporary

CitizenM is
full of art and
sculpture by
London-based
artists



Francesco Laera





art collector, so CitizenM is full of vibrant art and sculpture by London-based artists.

Every room is the same size (14 sqm), and comes with an extra large king-size bed, a widescreen TV, blackout blinds, a power shower and a MoodPad, which can be used to control your room ambience. When it comes to food and drink, the on-site restaurant is open 24/7.

“CanteenM is the hotel’s kitchen and bar,” says Francesco. “It serves as a pit stop for a bite to eat at any time of day, from early breakfasts to midnight snacks. Guests can grab a

barista-made coffee to take away, linger in the living room with a glass of wine, order a working lunch with sandwiches and salads, or indulge a sweet tooth.”

Another thing that CitizenM Victoria takes seriously is its environmental impact. The hotel has been awarded an A rating in energy efficiency for its energy performance certificate, and offers plenty of ways for guests to make their stay more sustainable.

“During your stay, you have an option to opt out of daily room cleaning,” says Francesco. “When you do that, we will make a donation to CitizenMovement [the hotel’s charitable fund] on your behalf. And there’s an added benefit – your stay is also kinder to the environment.”

High-tech and homely, CitizenM is an exciting addition to our wealth of wonderful hotels.

Some more hotel stays with a difference...

NO 1 GREAT SCOTLAND YARD



Next-door to the Great Scotland Yard Hotel you’ll find this five-storey Georgian townhouse. It’s used for guests looking for a more exclusive stay, with private dining facilities for up to 12, bespoke artwork in every room and a private office and lounge area.

hyatt.com

THE GUARDSMAN

If you fancy taking your dog on a weekend away, this five-star hotel in Westminster will provide walking services, comfy beds and home-cooked, pup-friendly meals like rib-eye steak and doggy chips.

guardsmanhotel.com



THE CLERMONT

Looking for a festive treat? The Clermont has a delicious new Christmas menu, including traditional roasts,

steamed Christmas pudding and British cheeseboards.

From November 28 to December 23 it’s available for Christmas parties.

theclermont.co.uk



The history man

Antony Beevor, Britain's bestselling historian, lives and works in Pimlico. He talks Russia, war and our fascination with evil

BY ALICE CAIRNS

Historian and Pimlico resident Antony Beevor has spent his life studying war – its origins, its grim reality and its insidious and far-reaching consequences.

"When I was a child, I had something called Perthes' disease, which meant that I was on crutches from the ages of three to seven," he says. "I obviously got an enormous physical chip on my shoulder, and inevitably was bullied at school, so I decided to join the army."

Five years later, he left the forces to pursue a career as a writer. His fascination with combat and its consequences never left him, however, and today his much-acclaimed studies of 20th century conflicts have been published in 33 languages. So how has war become the stuff of the bestseller list?

"War is the most extreme human experience," Antony says. "It tells us more about humanity, and inhumanity, than any other aspect of life. Many other academics resent the way war attracts so much interest, book sales and all the rest of it. But the fact is that we are fascinated by evil, and the way that in the most unexpected circumstances, people will either behave very badly, or with incredible and surprising empathy, courage and generosity. One is studying humanity under the most extreme pressures, and that in itself is much more interesting than studying the diets of medieval peasants, in my opinion!"

Antony is clear on one thing: whatever his Wikipedia entry might claim, he's not a military historian. His area of expertise is war as an all-encompassing human experience, not as a tactical exercise.

"A historian of war writes about humanity at war, not just troops on the battlefield," he says. "The suffering of wives and children, refugees and all the rest of it. That's a distinction that's become clearer in recent years, and we have some damn good female historians of war like Catherine Merridale as a result."

Of course, faithfully recording the sufferings and privations of war has its consequences. Antony admits that the research process can be deeply harrowing, leaving him prone to intrusive thoughts. While working on the books *Stalingrad* and *Berlin: The Downfall* with his research colleague Luba Vinogradova, he was so shocked by his discoveries that he struggled to eat.

"For months after writing *Stalingrad*, it was impossible for me to look at a plate of food



without thinking about how much that would have meant to about 10 people," he tells me.

"You can't quite escape it. When I was working with Luba, she was in tears often. With her, it was sort of instantaneous, but I found that it would hit me about two or three days later, most often in the middle of the night. It's a question of the incomprehension. The sheer useless sadism in the Russian Civil War shocked me, the idea of torturing people not to obtain information, but purely to satisfy some kind of hatred."

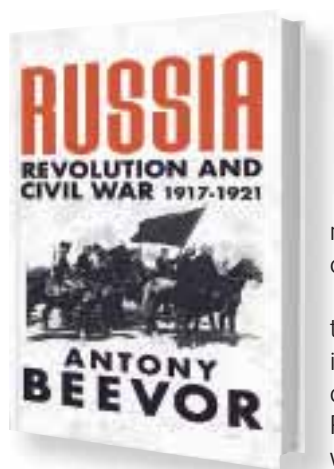
Nevertheless, Antony believes that historians perform an indispensable duty.

"The job of a historian is to understand, and to transmit that understanding to their readers. We're living now – apart from the war in Ukraine – so far away from the period of totalitarian warfare and all the horrors of the mid-20th century, that for the young it's almost impossible to imagine. The historian must bring that experience and context to life for them."

This is a duty that has become particularly important in an era of misinformation, where fake news, social media and clickbait culture often overshadow historical truths. Antony's suspicion about the blurring of truth extends even to much-loved works of historical fiction like Hilary Mantel's *Wolf Hall* – although he concedes that it's very well-written.

"Today, most people get their knowledge of history from fiction in one form or another, and television directors, producers and so forth are frankly not interested in historical accuracy. What they want is drama. As a result, you see the most appalling distortions time after time. They'll say it's based on a true story or inspired by true events, or whatever weasel formula is used. It misleads people in a very dangerous way."

Antony's latest book is *Russia: Revolution and Civil War, 1917-1921*. This remarkably timely tome has in fact been in the works for six years, and on Antony's radar since the 1980s. It tells the story of a conflict that has had global



repercussions, most notably in the current war in Ukraine.

"If one is going to understand the 20th century, and even what is going on in Ukraine now, one does need to understand the Russian Civil War," he says. "That was the conflict that started the split between left and right, red

and white, fascism and communism, which has dominated the whole century but also the Cold War right up to the collapse of the Soviet Union. So really it has overshadowed the world, and it is extraordinary how many people aren't conscious of it."

Antony views our current crisis as a Second Cold War – with a few crucial differences.

"Until now it's been left versus right, capitalism versus communism, the same clash which goes all the way back to 1917. But that has changed, because Cold War Two is much more of a conflict between democracy and autocracy. There's one possibility which may play in our favour, though, which is that Putin's threat of nuclear escalation is actually terrifying Beijing, and is liable to lose him the support of other countries,

including India and Kazakhstan."

He may spend his work time investigating some of the darkest chapters in human history, but Antony's home life plays out in the genteel surroundings of Pimlico. In his opinion, there's no better place to unwind.

"Pimlico is such a mixed, diverse area. It's brilliant from the point of view of transport – the Victoria line is an absolute lifesaver, and I love my views of Dolphin Square in one direction and the Houses of Parliament and Westminster in the other."

With politics, power and scandal as far as the eye can see, Pimlico is the perfect base for a man of history.

"One's main task is fighting generalisation," he concludes. "History is never tidy, and everyone wants to tidy it up. But actually, the important thing is to show the exceptions, to show things as they really were. That's what I try to do, anyway."



**"History is never tidy,
and everyone wants to
tidy it up"**

The Rubens

AT THE PALACE



Celebrate Christmas in style

The Red Carnation Hotel Collection are delighted to offer a selection of festive dining options at both The Rubens at the Palace hotel and bbar, situated in the heart of London Victoria. With a Festive Afternoon Tea on offer at each, crown a day spent Christmas shopping in the capital with an indulgent afternoon treat overlooking the Royal Mews of Buckingham Palace. Those searching for celebratory meals on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day have plenty of memorable experiences to choose from at The Rubens at the Palace, a five-star hotel famed for its generous hospitality and service excellence.

www.rubenshotel.com

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Full moon rising

Milanese restaurant Paper Moon is the latest food and beverage concept added to the OWO hotel in Whitehall. Opened by Pio Galligani and his wife Enrica Del Rosso in Milan in 1977, Paper Moon, which serves classic Italian dishes, has six restaurants worldwide. The new venue will feature olive trees and greenery and will overlook Horse Guards Avenue. Poised to open next spring, the OWO will have nine restaurants – three of which will be overseen by triple-Michelin-starred chef Mauro Colagreci – and three bars. *Whitehall*



Shaken not stirred

Great Scotland Yard Hotel has created a James Bond-inspired afternoon tea to commemorate the fictional secret agent's 60th anniversary. Launched with royal warrant holder Floris London, where Ian Fleming was a regular visitor, the offering is inspired by the British perfumer's luxury fragrance No 89. The menu features finger sandwiches including French Marans hen-egg truffle mayo on briochette and desserts such as bergamot and white chocolate mousse. Afternoon tea can be booked online or by calling 020 7925 4700. It costs £55 per person, or £65 for a champagne booking. *3-5 Great Scotland Yard*



Hot take

An Indian restaurant called Yaatra has opened in the old Westminster Fire Station. Led by executive chef Amit Bagyal, it promises a delicious journey through India from "famous cities to little-known villages, blending unique cultures and cooking styles". Starters include Amritsari prawns and Bhopali game kebab with a fried quail egg kofta, while mains take the form of Garhwal goat osso buco – the chef's home-style goat curry – and a Rajasthani hot spiced venison tenderloin, with organic roasted beetroot and saffron mashed potato. Finish things off with a cocktail created by master mixologist Nicholas Smith. *4 Greycoat Place*

Food, glorious food

From delicious afternoon teas
to buzzy late-night cocktails
and all-day restaurants, come
and taste what Victoria has
to offer

BY WILL MOFFITT

Treat yourself to a gift this season



1

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2

Iris & June

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coffee based
drinks

3

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dining in &
complimentary
pint of beer or
glass of house
wine

6

SW1

Fitness

50 % off
1:1 Boxing
sessions &
Bootcamps
for £5

Card-holders are entitled to a great range of unique and exciting offers on eating, drinking, leisure, shopping and fitness, all based in the local area.

**To view all the offers appearing on the web site please visit
www.victoriabid.co.uk/privilege-card/current-offers**

To receive your free Victoria Privilege Card,
or to provide promotional offers through your business,
visit www.victoriaprivilegecard.co.uk

Palm springs up

A Cuban-themed restaurant with a 400-person capacity has opened in Victoria's Nova development. Blending Cuban food and tropical cocktails, the Palm House marries the flavours and feel of Havana with the look of 1930s clubhouse Miami. Palm trees and glimmering lights adorn the space, which includes a colourful Cuban mezzanine and dedicated daiquiri bar. Guests can enjoy small plates like mahi-mahi ceviche and chilli chicken tacos and larger dishes including a Cuban sandwich and picanha rump steak.
150 Victoria Street



An inspired idea

Michelin-starred chef Adam Simmonds is working to establish a pop-up restaurant in Victoria staffed by homeless people. Located in Victoria Station the new project is called Home Kitchen and will run for 13 weeks. Staff will work as chefs or fulfil front-of-house roles and will be paid the London living wage. They will be provided with a travelcard and will earn a City & Guilds professional qualification, with a

view to landing them permanent hospitality roles. A report by homelessness charity Crisis found that nearly half of bosses would fire a worker who lost their home. The project is still fundraising and is seeking donations to cover the start-up costs.
Victoria Station



Seasonal surprises

Ganymede is celebrating its first anniversary with new dishes, a supper club series and a set lunch menu. Head chef Charlie Miller has created a daily-changing menu filled with beautifully plated seasonal dishes. Starters include options such as crab and basil ravioli or beef and smoked eel tartare with Jerusalem artichokes and gnocchi, followed by roast lamb saddle with crushed potatoes for the main course. Vanilla crème brûlée and chocolate tart provide the perfect sweet finish. Alongside a Sunday roast option Ganymede is also offering a monthly supplier supper club that includes a three-course meal paired with three drinks for £50 per person.
139 Ebury Street



Eat & drink Directory out & in



THE PEM RESTAURANT

A fresh take on fine dining in the heart of Westminster. The restaurant is inspired by suffragette Emily Wilding Davison, whose pet name was 'Pem', and celebrates generations of pioneering women. Winner of the National Restaurant Awards' One to Watch, The Pem's team is led by acclaimed Chef Sally Abé, serving a lively menu of British flavours and beautifully curated wines. The Pem also features The Harben - an intimate private dining room for up to 22 guests.

**Conrad London St. James,
22-28 Broadway, London SW1H 0BH
020 3301 8080**

**Nearest stations: St James's Park, Victoria
and Westminster
thepemrestaurant.com**

HEFAURE

Hefaure located at Nova Victoria are bubble tea experts! We bring you the best fresh drinks daily. We aim to provide top quality beverages for our customers. We use locally sourced fruit and ingredients, all of which are carefully prepared into the cup right in front of the customer.

**Nova Victoria, Sir Simon Milton Square, SW1E 5DJ
07846 837779
www.hefaure.co.uk/**



THE ATHENIAN

The UK's best Greek Street food, available nationwide. Deliveroo Restaurant of the Year 2020.

Founded in 2014 in London as a humble market stall and now with locations across the UK, UAE and Spain.

OUR FOOD

Serving Gyros & Souvlaki, Halloumi fries, Greek sides, plant based alternatives and sweet treats from Athens. Using nothing but the best ingredients, freshly made to order right there in front of you, for a big hit of taste and flavour. We source everything from our partners in Greece and here in the UK, so we know where every single ingredient comes from.

**Find us in Victoria, next to the Coach station.
15A Elizabeth Street, SW1W 9RP
Open Every Day**

STICKS 'N' SUSHI

One of Denmark's favourite restaurants, Sticks'n'Sushi combines their owners Danish and Japanese heritage with mouthwatering results. Serving sushi and yakitori sticks from the grill, this mix of culinary cultures have proved an award-winning combination.

**Unit 3-5, 3 Sir Milton Square
London SW1E 5EB
www.sticksnsushi.com**



Eat & drink Directory out & in

CAXTON GRILL

Caxton Grill located at St. Ermin's Hotel is a local neighbourhood restaurant serving seasonal food in a relaxed informal environment. Inspired by their rooftop garden, their menu highlights the best of Jospier Grill cooking. It features a range of seasonal meat, fish and vegetable dishes that are grilled and smoked to perfection. The restaurant is open 7 days a week for lunch and dinner. Privilege Card holders can enjoy 20% off the lunch a la carte menu.

**Caxton Grill, 2 Caxton Street,
London SW1H 0QW
www.caxtongrill.co.uk**



wagamama

wagamama welcomes a new menu to the bench. as the weather starts to turn + the summer sun is left behind, reach for new ramen to soothe the soul.

Introducing a twist on the classic. the gyoza ramen. two icons in one bowl. choose from vegetable or chicken gyoza, on a bed of noodles in a rich broth. Why not pair with new winter warmer, the panchi. wagamama's classic freshly squeezed juice with a warming shot of light or dark rum.

So head to the bench to connect with friends + relax into the steam of a soul-lifting broth.

**5 Cardinal Walk, Cardinal Place
London, SW1E 5JE
020 7828 0561**

www.wagamama.com/restaurants/london/victoria

THE CLERMONT VICTORIA

The Clermont Victoria plays host to every occasion with a selection of outlets to choose from including The Soak, Reunion Bar, and the Tea Lounge. Casual drinks or formal dinners. Light bites or leisurely lunches. Sitting right in the beating heart of Victoria station, we can offer you everything from breakfast to lunch or dinner, including a delightful afternoon tea menu. Fresh, seasonal, and modern British cuisine in central London, complemented by a carefully curated bar menu featuring craft beers, cocktails, and wine.

**The Clermont Victoria
101 Buckingham Palace Rd
London SW1W 0SJ
020 7523 5055
www.theclermont.co.uk/victoria/restaurants-bars**



NEAT BURGER

Neat Burger serves up a delicious menu of plant-based burgers, shakes and sides, using ethical alternative-proteins that are better for you and better for the environment.

Spanning eight locations around London, a pop-up in New York and a Flagship Manhattan restaurant opening later this year, the brand has big plans to inspire people to make more climate-friendly food choices and create a sustainably delicious future for all.

**36 Buckingham Palace Road
London SW1W 0RE
020 4580 1255
www.neat-burger.com/**

DAVID MELLOR

Sloane Square shop. Cutlery, Kitchenware & English Crafts



4 Sloane Square, Chelsea SW1W 8EE 020 7730 4259 davidmellordesign.co.uk
14 New Cavendish Street, Marylebone W1G 8UW 020 8050 4259

SALLY ABÉ, THE PEM

We go home to my parents' for Christmas and indulge in some real family favourites, kicking off on Christmas Eve when my mum always makes the same chicken dish she had when she was a kid.

Mum and I share the cooking on Christmas Day. It's eggs benedict at breakfast – I usually add some shaved truffle for an interesting twist. Mum always buys us selection boxes, and I can eat the whole box before lunch. We can even go through the Cadbury chocolate tree ornaments too!

Lunch is at 3pm – a classic roast turkey. I make both mashed potatoes with lots of butter in them and roast potatoes.

Everyone in the family has their favourite Christmas dessert. It's my Christmas pudding for Mum and me – I also make the brandy butter. Dad has his Viennetta and my sister has chocolate cake. We also have a good stilton after pudding, which I feed with port for about 10 days before we eat it. So special.



MIKE REID, M VICTORIA

A merry Christmas isn't all about the food in the Reid house – the drinks also need to be flowing! I like to swap out traditional eggnog for a fruity, lighter flavour, saving room for the main event, the big Christmas lunch.

One of the greatest traditions we have is that everybody brings something with them. Sharing the load at Christmas and getting all the family to bring one dish which just needs to be finished off quickly means I don't have to be glued to the kitchen days before the big event. Every social event in my household starts with a cheese board – you can't imagine how extravagant it gets at Christmas. It's a great way to welcome guests, so you don't have the stress of canapés. I fill it with cheeses, chutneys and oatcakes and go the extra mile and add charcuterie meats as well. Of course, mine has a healthy dose of wagyu pastrami as a main feature.

A family Christmas

Local chefs share their festive foodie memories

BY CORRIE BOND-FRENCH



**DANIEL RODRIGUES,
THE JONES FAMILY KITCHEN**

Where I come from in Goa, India, food plays a huge role – and being a Christian, Christmas is the biggest part. We invite our friends and family to a get-together where we cook lots of dishes like Goan sausage pulao, a beef roast called beef assad, chicken cafreal, prawn balchao and a pork offal dish called sorpotel.

We also make sweets before Christmas Day arrives, which we then distribute to our neighbours, friends and family, especially those who have lost their loved ones and can't celebrate as they are mourning.

I have so many memories from childhood Christmases when my parents would get us together to prepare the sweets and, being the smallest, I used to be given the jobs like stirring the doce – a coconut and gram cake, which takes at least four hours on a kerosene stove and used to be great fun. Today my wife gives me the same job!



PAOLO SANAPO, CAXTON GRILL

Having worked on Christmas Day for the past 15 years, Christmas has been different to the traditional family gatherings I'm used to back home in a small village outside Brindisi, Puglia.

Family Christmas starts on Christmas Eve with a seafood supper of fresh fish stew, the best local wines and an authentic Italian panettone cut at midnight. For Christmas dinner we roast local game such as rabbit.

However, every year now I enjoy spending this special day with my team. After service, we gather in the kitchen to cook up a storm and celebrate together, indulging with dishes such as beef wellington – my all-time seasonal favourite – with all the Christmas trimmings and raising a glass to a successful winter season.

I always receive a taste of home from Mama – a hamper of homemade desserts and sweet treats. I have wonderful memories of helping her in the kitchen. My absolute favourite is her chocolate-dipped almond cookies – these are the taste of Christmas for me.

MAURILIO MOLTENI, TOZI

Christmas is an incredibly important time for all Italians, both young and old. I have so many fond memories from childhood; the smell of roasted chestnuts, the wonderful lights, roaring fires, Christmas trees in town squares and snow, if we were lucky enough!

I love to start with wonderful, cured meats served with pickled vegetables and a selection of breads and focaccia.

My favourite pasta dishes are lasagne and also wild mushroom risotto – it's completely

irresistible served with white truffle. We usually have slow-cooked lamb shoulder or veal osso buco that melts in the mouth, served with braised cavolo nero, Castelluccio lentils and roasted root vegetables.

After a cheese selection with some Italian chutney, dessert must be wonderful panettone. I love to eat it warm with plenty of mascarpone and marsala cream, with a slice of torrone [nougat] and a nice glass of Passito di Pantelleria to finish.



TATE MEMBERSHIP

Give the gift of art with Tate membership. Tate Britain's 2023 programme ranges from Sarah Lucas to the Rossettis.

From £72 per year,
Tate Britain, Millbank

CHRISTMAS MACARONS

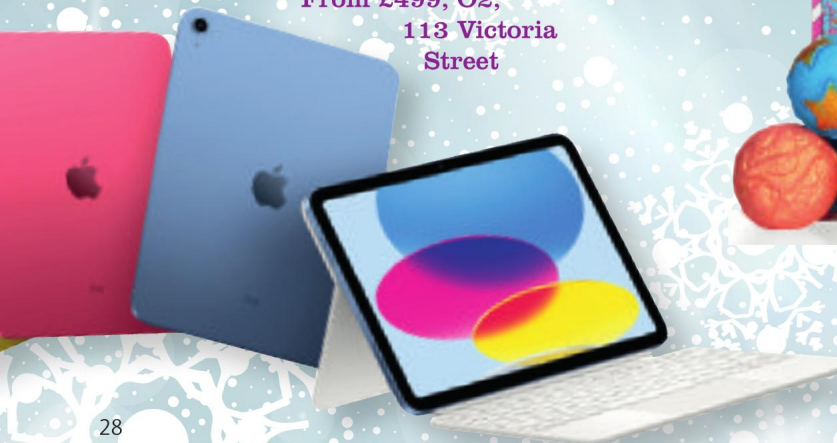
This beautiful box of 12 macarons includes candy cane, trifle, Christmas pudding and gingerbread flavours.

£30, Biscuiteers,
14-15 Eccleston Yards

10TH GENERATION IPAD

Apple's brand new iPad comes in four covetable colours and is sure to be top of every tech-lover's Christmas list.

From £499, O2,
113 Victoria Street



Something you want



CHOCOLATE WREATH BOX

That sweet-toothed someone in your life will love this huge box of caramels, pralines and truffles.

£43.50, Hotel Chocolat, 133 Victoria Street

FRAGRANCE BY KILIAN

The Straight to Heaven white cristal scent contains hints of rum and nutmeg with a smooth, satiny finish.

£195 for 50ml,
Les Senteurs, 71
Elizabeth Street



CHRISTMAS BATH SET

With 17 bath bombs and bubbles, this limited-edition bath set is perfect for festive pampering.

£95, Lush, Unit 42b,
Buckingham Palace Road

RULED NOTEBOOKS

Get organised with these brightly coloured Agenzio notebooks, which come in a rainbow of colours and sizes. **£14, Paperchase, Unit 30, Victoria Station**

POST SHAVE BALM

Soothe sensitive skin with this Hawkins & Brimble balm, made with olive oil, almond oil and cocoa. **£5.97, Boots, Unit 42b, Victoria Station**



CABLE KNIT HAT

The large and fluffy orange pom-pom adds a playful touch to this pale pink beanie. **£24, Oliver Bonas, Unit 49, Victoria Station**



Wrap it up

Find all the Christmas gift inspiration you need in Victoria's local shops

BY KATE WHITE

THERMAL SOCKS

These warm wool-blend socks with stylish colour-blocking contain a luxurious touch of silk. **£10, M&S, Cardinal Place**



SHEEPSKIN SLIPPERS

The Ugg Scuffette mule slippers in chestnut will keep feet warm and cosy on cold nights. **£80, Sweaty Betty, Unit 10, Cardinal Place**



Something you need



KITCHENAID STAND MIXER

From cakes and bakes to pizza, pasta, dips and sauces, this mixer is a must for cooking enthusiasts. **£499, Waitrose (click and collect), Bressenden Place**

CHRISTMAS HEADBAND

This gold metal headband, complete with a Christmas bow, brings a dash of festive fun.

£10, Accessorize, Unit 32, Victoria Station



SEQUIN MINI DRESS

Stand out in silver in this glitzy long-sleeved mini dress, made with countless light-catching sequins.

£79.50, Oliver Bonas, Unit 49, Victoria Station



GREEN TURTLENECK

This men's turtleneck sweater, made from a spun wool blend, is a winter wardrobe staple.

£49.99, Zara, 82 Victoria Street



VELVET BOW TIE

With its rich, deep emerald colour, this elegant bow tie will add the final flourish to a smart suit.

£10, M&S, Cardinal Place



METALLIC STRIPE JUMPER

This shimmering, stripy jumper will add something special to any outfit.

£150, Me+Em, 45 Elizabeth Street



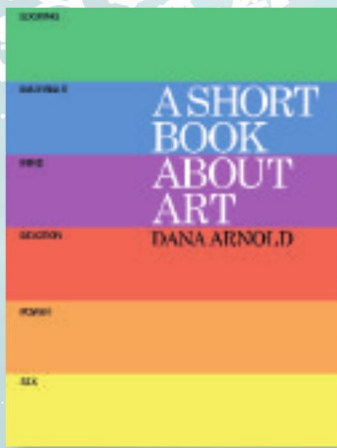
Something to wear

CRAFTDEAN BROGUES

These sturdy and stylish dark tan leather brogues are both comfortable and classic.

£112, Clarks, 149 Victoria Street





A SHORT BOOK ABOUT ART

An illuminating and accessible insight into how art is made, interpreted and displayed.

£12.99, Tate Britain, Millbank

QUEEN ELIZABETH II: 1926-2022

The late monarch's long and glorious reign is celebrated in pictures drawn mostly from the BBC archives.

£22, Waterstones, 88 Victoria Street

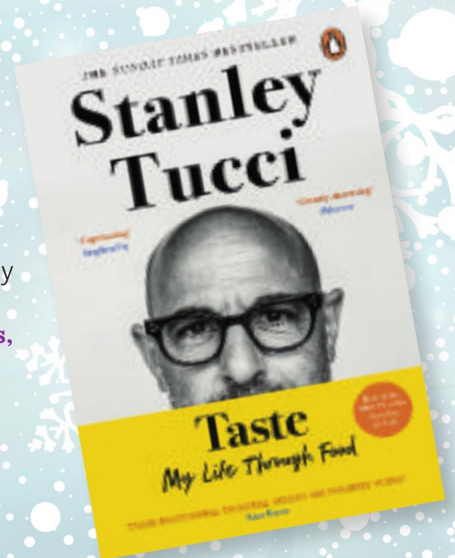


Something to read

TASTE: MY LIFE THROUGH FOOD

Actor Stanley Tucci's intimate memoir of life in and out of the kitchen is a thoroughly enjoyable read.

£9.99, Waterstones, 88 Victoria Street



THE SPIRIT ENGINEER

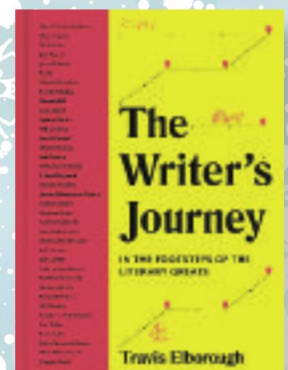
With its chilling prose and clever plot, this Edwardian gothic novel is guaranteed to have you gripped.

£8.99, Belgravia Books, 12 Eccleston Street

THE WRITER'S JOURNEY

From epic road trips to the finest hotels, this book follows 35 important journeys taken by literary greats.

£20, Belgravia Books, 12 Eccleston Street



WINTER

WINTER

Wintry works of art, from frosty landscapes to family and festivity, depict the season in all its glory.

£9.99, Tate Britain, Millbank

New friend

Why is Victoria the perfect location for Sweaty Betty?

We love Victoria so much that in addition to opening a shop here, we also moved our corporate office here too! Victoria is right in the heart and soul of London and accessible to so many of our Betties. We love being in the mix of such a destination, especially one with such a big fitness and wellness community.

What makes Sweaty Betty such an exciting brand to work for?

While many businesses are turning away from traditional retail and focusing solely on digital, we truly believe in the in-store customer experience. You can't beat the one-to-one face time and connection you get in store. It's one of the cornerstones of our business and something we really value. The emphasis on this personal connection really differentiates Sweaty Betty from other brands and is one of the many reasons why it's such an incredible place to work.



YOUR FAVOURITE PLACE...

...to grab lunch?

Veggie Pret in Cardinal Place for our fix of health and the Ivy Victoria if we're feeling fancy

...for a morning coffee?

Joe & the Juice at 70 Victoria Street

...to shop?

We love spending a lunch hour in L'Occitane trying out all their beautiful skincare treats

What Sweaty Betty product couldn't you live without?

Our Power leggings. This is our hero product by far. The leggings are so good a pair is sold every 30 seconds. Once you try these you won't want to wear anything else.

What's your favourite place to work out in the Victoria area?

We are spoilt for choice with 1Rebel, Gymbox, City Athletic and Manor SW1 all on our doorstep. We couldn't pick a favourite!

Ooh Betty!

Beloved gym-wear brand Sweaty Betty has opened a new store in Cardinal Place. Caroline Scott, senior vice president of global retail, tells us more

BY ALICE CAIRNS





STAY AHEAD OF THE CROWD

We know that these days you might not be in the area every day, but you still want to keep up-to-date with what's happening locally

So why not sign up to receive the digital edition of Victoria and we'll send you the latest edition a day or two before it hits the streets of London

That's it. You will receive no other emails or marketing material

To start the service simply visit
pubbiz.com/subscribe

No complaints

Grumbles has been serving the people of Pimlico since 1964. We discover the story behind this SW1 stalwart

BY CORRIE BOND-FRENCH

When Bob Dylan released *The Times They Are A-Changin'* in 1964 he was marking an eventful year. The Beatles were conquering the world, the Rolling Stones released their first album and in America the Civil Rights Act was signed within months of the investigation into JFK's assassination concluding that Lee Harvey Oswald had acted alone.

Elizabeth Taylor married Richard Burton for the first time, Cassius Clay claimed his first world heavyweight title and in Blighty, Mods and Rockers fought on beaches, Great Train Robbers were sentenced, BBC Two was launched and the new Wilson-led Labour government took the reins.

London had started swinging, life seemed full of possibilities, and in Pimlico's Churton Street, Grumbles, the first restaurant in the capital with a humorous "silly" name and a generously spirited objective to be cheap and cheerful, opened its doors.

Now 58 years old and counting, those doors have opened more times than most of us have had hot dinners: Grumbles is a Pimlico institution.

Opened by Jeremy Friend, the original wooden decor he used to create a cosy, intimate interior remains intact, and the menu still features favourites from the early days including the Grumbles fillet, calves' liver and bacon and Grumbles fish pie. Comfort food in comfortable surroundings has been a winning combination.

Regulars, old-timers and new faces alike still beat a path to the Grumbles door, and there is no jumping the queue – all diners are

treated equally, regardless of fame, titles or other factors.

The history now in Grumbles' DNA is both inimitable and irreplaceable. Coupled with a tradition to serve honest, classic food at reasonable prices, it represents a friendly, affordable neighbourhood bistro, which, while not quite preserved in aspic, happily celebrates its traditions.

Small wonder then that Grumbles appeals to a broad clientele. In the 1960s it was frequented by musicians such as the Beatles, the Stones and the Mamas & the Papas.

Politicians and journalists alike all appreciate the calm atmosphere. Indeed, the SDP became the Liberal Democrat party after plotting in the downstairs alcove.

And royals have enjoyed many a Grumbles special. Lady Diana Spencer frequently came in for lunch when she worked at the Young England nursery in St George's Square.

And there is an anecdote about a young Clint Eastwood swinging by and asking for a table. He was told he would have to wait 20 minutes or so. When he returned it was still going to

be a few more minutes, and Clint's response to this was to ask, "Do you know who I am?"

The reply was "Yes, Mr Eastwood, we know exactly who you are. If you'd like to wait at the bar where Princess Margaret is also waiting, we'll get you as soon as your table's ready." Apparently, he didn't hang around.

What is also particularly charming about Grumbles is the story of the staff. Many are very long-term, including Lincoln, himself the son of a former manager. He's been





Alex Turnbull

associated with the place for nearly 50 years and is pictured as a child in some decades-old staff photographs.

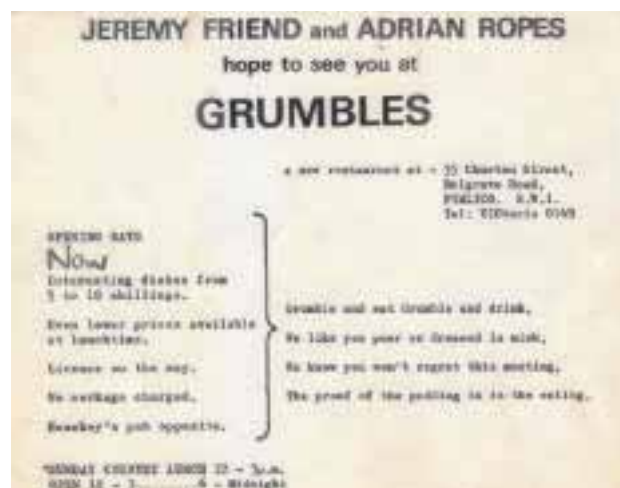
"There's definitely a family feel to it here," says owner Alex Turnbull. "I like to think they're treated well."

"You can't fake history.

We are the genuine article"

One of just three owners, Alex purchased Grumbles in 2011 after working for previous owner Charles Tidman, who had done the same 18 years earlier, buying from founder Jeremy Friend. Lockdown was the first time the doors had shut in decades.

"Jeremy is still the landlord, and still lives around here. He helped us out a lot, particularly during Covid," says Alex. "There have been a lot of challenges and this place has weathered many recessions. Eating out



Team photo from 1988

anywhere is a luxury. I just feel that we've all had such hard times, surely it can only get better."

For Alex, taking pride in preserving the Grumbles traditions is important. Many returning customers are thrilled that the place is so evocative of visits decades past. "We're an old friend, a reliable institution and we're consistent," says Alex. "We're one of the oldest independent restaurants in London. We offer Anglo-French bistro food, and we're still very affordable – we don't mark the wine up much, we offer 10 to 15 good reds and whites under £30, and that's quite rare. We're trying to keep prices down as much as we can."

Cloning the Grumbles USP is not an option. "Sometimes people ask me why I don't open another Grumbles, but you can't fake history. We are the genuine article, our founder is still very much part of the place, we're lucky to have such wonderful support and we'll continue to thrive."

Wrap up warm for
strolls and hikes in
the great outdoors

BY ALICE CAIRNS

Barbour

The Mapledene showerproof jacket, £269, has a cord collar and a floral House of Hackney lining, adding a bold pop of colour when you leave it unbuttoned.

JOHN LEWIS VIA
CLICK AND COLLECT
FROM WAITROSE,
BRESENDEN PLACE

A winter

New Look

The khaki quilted collarless jacket, £36.99, is perfect for layering. It's also part of the New Look Kind collection, meaning that it has been responsibly sourced with sustainability in mind.

VICTORIA PLACE
SHOPPING CENTRE

Accessorize

A warm scarf is an essential for any winter walk. This Carter check blanket scarf, £20, is a versatile pick in neutral colours, made from a soft woven fabric.

UNIT 32, VICTORIA
STATION

Marks & Spencer

Stride out in style with the Hiker ankle boots, £45. They've been designed to stay comfortable during long walks, with a chunky sole and practical antibacterial padding.

CARDINAL PLACE

Oliver Bonas

Get back to nature with the Jungle Cat knitted jumper, £65. It will keep you warm on a cold walk, but will also look gorgeous at a Christmas party.

UNIT 49, VICTORIA STATION

wonderland

John Lewis

The Beale parka jacket in smoked paprika, £175, is designed to withstand chilly weather. The six external pockets give you plenty of space to stash your essentials – no bags necessary.

VIA CLICK AND
COLLECT FROM
WAITROSE,
BRESSENDEN
PLACE

Tricoté

Your feet will stay toasty warm in these geometric pattern socks, £25, from Japanese knitwear specialist Tricoté. The bold pattern transforms your toes into miniature works of art.

TATE
BRITAIN SHOP,
MILLBANK

Mountain
Warehouse
Made from 100 per cent cotton, the lightweight men's flannel shirt, £29.99, is a great base layer. The breathable fabric ensures you'll stay cool and comfortable as you walk.

VICTORIA PLACE
SHOPPING CENTRE

Houses of Parliament Shop

The Big Ben Christmas jumper, £48, is inspired by the Elizabeth Tower. The clock hands are set to 3pm, the time when the monarch delivers the Christmas broadcast.

12 BRIDGE STREET

Jones Bootmaker

Inspired by the classic biker boot, the Enzo, £120, is a sturdy choice for a long hike. The thick lug sole is suited to any terrain.

UNIT 19A,
CARDINAL PLACE

Get out!

Local events from pop-ups to parties

BY ALICE CAIRNS



Shop till you drop

London HQ recently partnered with Pop Up Africa to create a market in Cardinal Place. Celebrating Black History Month, the pop-up showcased black-owned businesses including Caribbean and Ghanaian street food as well as skincare, art and jewellery.





Raise a glass

The Victoria, Victoria Westminster, Whitehall and Northbank BIDs held a drinks reception before the Military Music Spectacular on Horse Guards Road. Held at the Guards Museum on Birdcage Walk, guests included the Coldstream Guards, while corgi artworks from the recent platinum jubilee corgi trail were on display.



Great giving

This is the time of year when individuals often consider donating to good causes, while businesses sometimes select a charity to support for the forthcoming year. But there are a lot of wonderful causes out there so which one to choose?

One way is to select a locally based charity where individuals or teams from local businesses can have a tangible connection with the causes they support.

Fundraising is always welcome in the charity sector but with local charities, there are other ways you can show your support including volunteering to help organise and run events and fundraisers or lending a friendly hand or ear.

The area is home to myriad charities, so these inclusions just scratch the surface, but if you are motivated to make a difference just remember what Winston Churchill said: “We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give.”

Here is our short selection of locally based charities offering a range of support that isn’t just financial – and the majority of them welcome volunteers.

One Westminster

From its Chapel Street HQ, One Westminster supports more than 200 Westminster voluntary and community organisations to deliver their services by providing funding, governance, partnership and other relevant information and advice. It also runs the Westminster Volunteer Centre, linking volunteers to local organisations to help people who live, work or study in Westminster to find their ideal volunteering role with Westminster voluntary organisations and community groups – where there is community benefit. Roles include craft assistant, museums, dog-walking companions, befriending, hospitals, admin support, gardening, charity shops, vaccination centres, volunteer drivers and IT support.

As Nigel Barber, volunteer service manager says: “When volunteering works well it benefits both parties – the volunteers and also the placement organisation. It is a two-way street.”

onewestminster.org.uk

Blue Cross Victoria animal hospital

The hospital, which opened on Hugh Street in 1906, is the oldest of its kind in the world. It was rebuilt in 2001 and has state-of-the-art veterinary facilities. It treats thousands of pets every year, with treatments ranging from routine neutering to complex operations.

bluecross.org.uk/victoria-animal-hospital



The Childhood Trust

There are 700,000 children living in poverty in London and the Buckingham Palace Road-based Childhood Trust is doing something about it through its initiatives to improve the life chances of disadvantaged young people.

It delivers around 150 projects for children across London every year and runs two volunteer programmes that provide immediate, practical support to vulnerable families and local youth projects.

childhoodtrust.org.uk

With Christmas around the corner, there's no better time to support the countless good causes on our doorstep

The Cardinal Hume Centre

From its Horseferry Road HQ (and local charity shop) the centre supports families and young people facing poverty and homelessness, helping them to thrive by removing barriers and supporting them to realise their full potential.
cardinalhumecentre.org.uk



Shop and Donate

Shop and Donate provides community support in the most deprived boroughs of London, by giving, selling and delivering food packages and other basic essentials. It is constantly looking for new volunteers to help combat issues surrounding isolation by offering a chance to interact with others.
shopanddonate.org



ETAT (Encouragement Through the Arts and Talking)

ETAT brings together lonely and isolated people for arts and crafts activities. The groups aim to relieve isolation and stimulate new ideas through art, purposeful reading and listening and expressing their views.
etat.org.uk



Doorstep Library

Among developed nations, the UK has the clearest link between poor literacy and unemployment. One in five children aged 5-8 does not own a single book.

In the UK, how well you read has a direct bearing on how well you do in life, so Doorstep Library's volunteers make weekly visits to children at home or online, to read stories, lend books and connect families to their local community.
doorsteplibrary.org.uk



The Passage

The Passage aims to help people to address the issues that have contributed to them becoming homeless, and to enable them to move on to live safe, happy and fulfilling lives.

Its services are split between its resource centre, which provides urgent support; residential accommodation while it figures out long-term solutions; and homelessness prevention projects that reduce the risk of repeat homelessness.
passage.org.uk



Veterans Aid

For 90 years, the Victoria Square-based charity has been helping ex-servicemen and women in crisis and has played a significant part in the reduction of homelessness among veterans. Since 2007, the charity has helped UK veterans based in more than 70 countries.

veterans-aid.net

St Vincent's Family Project

The wide-ranging project run out of Central Hall offers services for young families and aims to support the whole family by offering therapies and courses including creative art therapies, one-to-one support, support groups, parenting and healthy living courses.

Drop-in sessions provide a space for local families with children aged under five where they can socialise with one another, while their children learn and make new friends through a range of educational activities.

svfp.org.uk



City of Westminster Charitable Trust

The trust manages a Community Contribution Fund grant awards scheme, which gives Westminster residents the opportunity to give more to their local community on a voluntary basis. The grants help increase opportunities for young people, help lonely people feel less isolated and provide extra support for people who find themselves sleeping rough.

westminster.gov.uk/westminster-trust



Caxton Youth Organisation

Caxton Youth promotes independent living and social skills for young people with disabilities in the area.

In the interests of social welfare it provides members with facilities for recreation and informal education and encourages collective initiatives with other community organisations to ensure members are not marginalised.

caxtonyouth.org

Westminster Befriend a Family

Based on Buckingham Palace Road, the organisation provides practical and emotional support to isolated families in the area. It proactively offers befriending services, matching volunteers with families to help in difficult times and prevent negative outcomes. Its services include mentoring for young people and support groups for parents, as well as offering long-term sustainable social networks.

befriendafamily.co.uk

St Andrew's Club

Few would expect the world's oldest youth club, founded in 1866, to be based on Old Pye Street in Westminster.

St Andrew's Club has been providing a neutral environment, away from the intimidation of estate tensions, for many years. Members can join the club from five years old through to adulthood.

Issues affecting members' lives are addressed through workshops on topics such as gangs and radicalisation, drug prevention, money management, healthy eating, body image and social media bullying.

standrewsclub.com

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We've all been there – staring at a sea of Quality Street wrappers and vowing to hit the gym with a vengeance come January. Luckily for us, the local area is full of fitness classes that should suit any requirement or ability, with plenty of fun twists on the traditional workout regime to keep us entertained while we're breaking a sweat. Whether you'd prefer soothing yoga or an intense, chilli-fuelled workout, check out our picks...



Fit for purpose

Looking to get ahead of your New Year's resolution? These fun fitness classes will make it easy

BY ALICE CAIRNS

Great for... the busy

Can't fit a workout into your busy schedule? No problem. Every class at City Athletic is just 30 minutes long, with no booking needed, so you can squeeze a session into your lunch hour and still have time for a shower and a smoothie. Options include core conditioning, yoga, callisthenics and more, while Purus Active, a clinic offering osteopathy, physiotherapy and sports massage, is also on site to help you recover from any aches and pains.
20 Palace Street

Great for... the brave

Don't panic, but the Ring of Fire class at Gymbox starts with all participants signing a medical waiver. You'll then munch on increasingly hot chillies as you squat, stretch and lift, working your way up to the infamous California Reaper, which must be eaten while performing a bike sprint. Why? Because capsaicin, the chemical compound that gives chillies their heat, has been found to enhance energy expenditure and fat oxidation, helping you burn around 200 extra calories during your workout.
123 Victoria Street



Great for... fast results

Barry's claims to offer the "best workout in the world", and is known for the extremely high intensity workouts it hosts in its Red Room (the dark, mirrored studio with signature red lighting). The classes here are fast-paced and designed to push you to your limit, so expect to sprint, jump, lift, plank and generally work at the threshold of your fitness. All that hard work will pay off, however, with an estimated 1,000 calories burned per session. Afterwards, you can head to the Fuel Bar for a well-earned protein shake to promote muscle repair and decrease soreness.

16 Eccleston Yards



Great for... fighters

At the Jon Durrant Training Studio, you can learn boxing, kickboxing, MMA and conditioning from a team of world champions and Team GB athletes. Although the coaches are highly trained in a range of combat disciplines, you don't need to have any experience to take part. In fact, the gym accepts everyone from first-time novices to world-level professionals, and even has a regular session for kids. The Fight Camp Conditioning class is the perfect choice for anyone who wants to build up their strength and endurance.

Queen Mother Sports Centre, Vauxhall Bridge Road



Great for... your mind

Working out isn't just about toning your body. H2 Clubs' range of yoga classes, which include dynamic vinyasa yoga, are designed to promote meditation and mindfulness. You'll work on linking your movements with your breath, improving flexibility, coordination and balance while leaving you calm and focused. If you like your yoga a little more sweaty, try hatha vinyasa yoga, which requires you to hold poses for longer.

10 Bressenden Place

Great for... party people

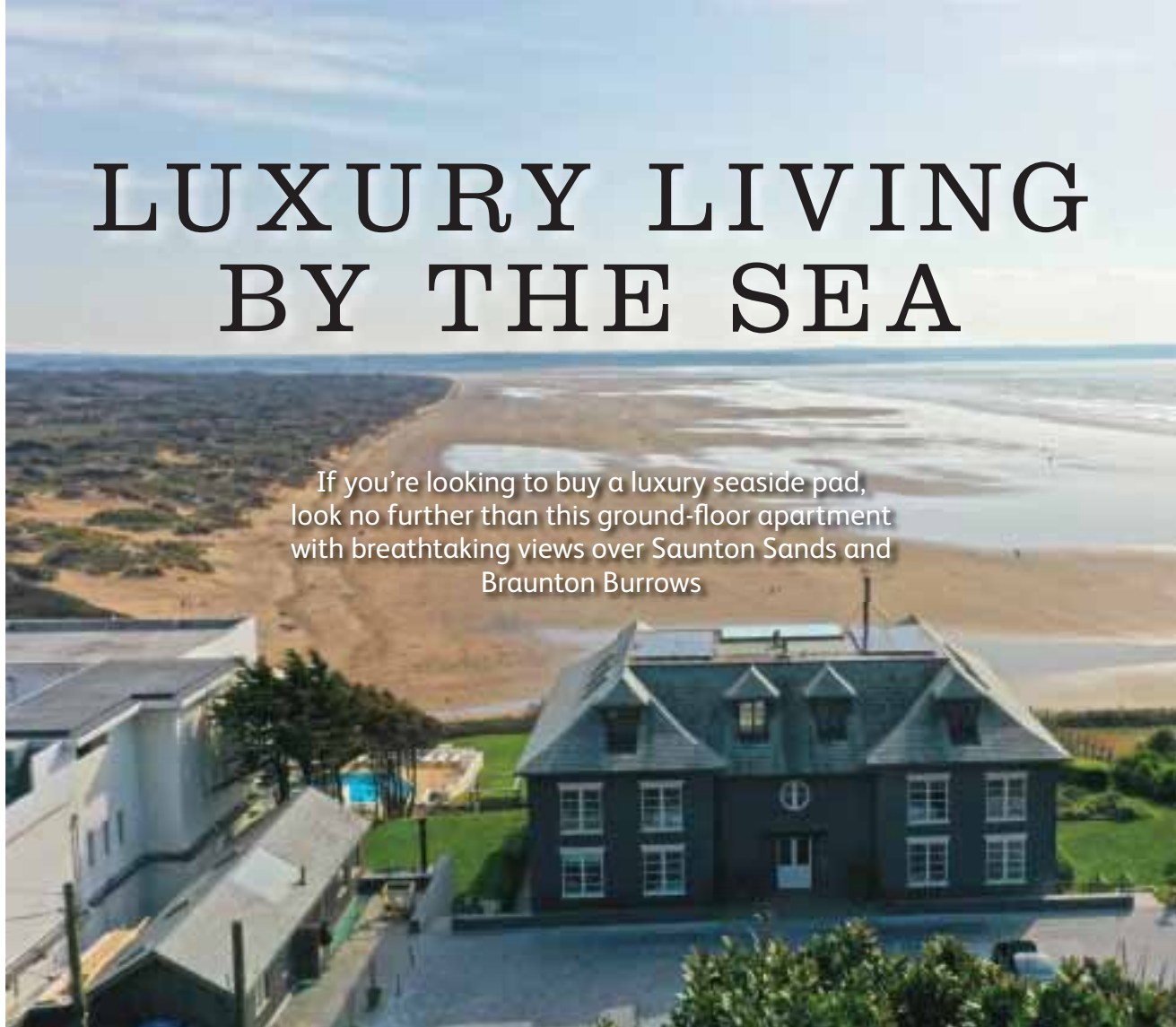
What do you get when you mix a gym with a nightclub? 1Rebel, of course. With colourful laser lights, personalised playlists and top-notch sound systems, the gym is designed to get your heart pumping while you're having fun. We recommend the 45-minute Ride class, a fresh take on spinning that should help you burn up to 800 calories. If you have a party to get to after class, you can visit the on-site blow-dry bar for a cut, style or up-do before grabbing a smoothie in the Refuel bar. On Fridays, they serve prosecco...

Nova South Building,
5 Victoria Street



LUXURY LIVING BY THE SEA

If you're looking to buy a luxury seaside pad, look no further than this ground-floor apartment with breathtaking views over Saunton Sands and Braunton Burrows



Chalet Saunton – a development of seven contemporary apartments on the stunning North Devon coast – has been run as a successful holiday rental business since it opened in 2017 and, now, Apartment One, currently let out for short-term holidays throughout the year, is the first and only one in the building to come to the market.

The ground-floor apartment is up for sale (leasehold), providing a rare investment opportunity in this highly sought-after Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Heritage Coast and Coastal Preservation Area.

Designed and built by property developer Tim Fleming on the site of his original family home, Chalet Saunton has a communal entrance hallway, staircase and lift, while the 1,476 sq ft

apartment has its own separate private entrance. South-facing, it boasts an open-plan kitchen/living room/sitting room, a principal bedroom with en suite bathroom, two further bedrooms, a family shower room, a private terrace to the front and parking at the back for one vehicle.

The slick, minimalist interiors are set against a backdrop of what has to be one of the most spectacular views in the whole of the UK, with floor-to-ceiling windows acting as a frame for what is nature's own magnificent piece of artwork – a view that has inspired many artists and writers over the years. Back in 1987, the beach was the location for legendary photographer Storm Thorgerson's photo shoot for Pink Floyd's *A Momentary Lapse of Reason* album artwork.

Fast-forward 34 years and the area is a now a magnet for

wealthy and famous guests from top legal professionals, sports stars, musicians and entrepreneurs – model Jade Parfitt was pictured on the balcony of the Penthouse at Chalet Saunton on the morning of her wedding to Jack Dyson back in 2019.





It's easy to see the attraction. As well as offering world-class family beaches, the area is renowned for some of the best surf in the country. The village of Croyde (four miles away) is a popular surfing beach and has a number of pubs, restaurants, deli & café and shop selling everyday amenities.

The renowned gastropub, The Rock, is about five miles away in Georgeham, whilst more extensive shopping can be found in nearby Braunton and Barnstaple. Exeter Airport is about an hour and 20 minutes' drive away and offers a number of daily flights to most European cities. It also caters for private and chartered jets as well as helicopters.

There are a range of facilities in Saunton itself including Surf Saunton, the surf school, The Sands Café, a beach shop and surf shop.

Next door to the Chalet is the fabulous Saunton Sands Hotel,

which boasts a large heated pool, gym and spa facilities.

The Chalet has a communal garden, outside shower, surf board rack and terrace. It benefits from a historic right of way to the beach and has solar power providing electricity to the communal areas.

Other sporting activities in the area include kitesurfing, kayaking and paddle boarding. Saunton is also home to the highly-regarded Saunton Golf Club, while the surrounding area is internationally recognised for shooting and fishing.

With all of this, a great commuter network – not to mention an increasing number of Michelin-starred restaurants in the area – the lifestyle offered in North Devon is unique and is why it is attracting an increasing number of people and their families seeking a better quality of life.

For further details or to arrange a viewing, contact Christopher Bailey at Knight Frank on 01392 423111. chaletsaunton.com

THE BEACH WAS THE LOCATION FOR THE PHOTO SHOOT FOR PINK FLOYD'S A MOMENTARY LAPSE OF REASON ALBUM ARTWORK



Steaming ahead

All aboard the British Pullman, a Belmond Train, England. This glamorously restored 1920s train has a carriage designed by Wes Anderson and transports travellers from Victoria Station to far-flung destinations across the UK. We asked general manager Craig Moffat for some of his travel memories

BY ALICE CAIRNS

Tell me about your role on the British Pullman?

I have the incredible thrill and responsibility of managing one of the world's most unique and meaningful hospitality experiences. With the Pullman it's all about perpetuating the legendary art of travel and preserving the storied legacy of the train while injecting contemporary spirit to ensure it stays relevant for today's travellers.

Your favourite place you've visited for work?

We are so privileged with our wonderful train to visit some of the most incredible events across the UK. Royal Ascot and the Grand National are always great fun as are festivals like Goodwood Revival. My favourite recently, though, was a trip to this year's Brighton Pride, which was hosted onboard by three fabulous drag queens from *Drag Race UK*. It was an incredible journey, full of joy and friendship. It showed that, even though the Pullman is nearly 100 years old, the experience is timeless and always contemporary. Luckily, having an amazing

time with friends and family has never gone out of style.

... and outside of work?

A few years ago my wife and I stayed in a converted convent north of Bergamo in Italy. We arrived very late at night and all the restaurants in the village were closed. The family who ran the hotel invited us into their own kitchen and we enjoyed the most incredible meal together, which continued almost till sunrise. It was the most amazing example of true hospitality that Laurel and I had ever encountered – until we first travelled on British Pullman! It taught me that your surroundings can be as luxurious as you wish, but it is nothing without the genuine human touch.

Favourite mode of travel (other than trains)?

I don't know if this counts, but I just love to walk. I find that some of the most amazing experiences happen when you wander around a new city with an open mind and a sense of adventure. We have access to so much travel advice and information now that the tendency to

Onboard the Pullman

The Grand National



Bergamo

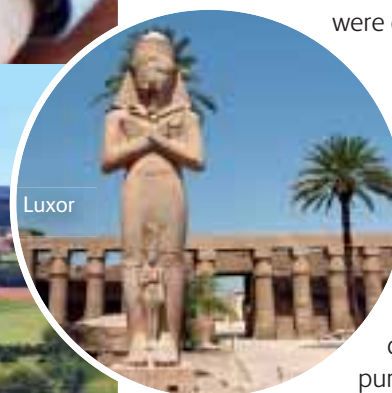
plan a vacation down to the smallest detail is very strong. I say resist the urge. Travel should be a little bit scary and a little bit confusing. The best things in life often are.

Any travel disasters?

The one that I will never forget was many years ago, when a friend and I decided to do Egypt on a very modest budget. We travelled from Cairo to Luxor by train and then decided to take a four-hour bus from Luxor to Hurghada on the Red Sea coast. About six hours into a scorching hot journey on a very old bus it dawned on us that we were in fact travelling in entirely the wrong direction and were on our way to Abu Simbel on the Sudanese border, almost 1,000km from where we were meant to be. It was a little bit scary and a little bit confusing but who cares, the temples were amazing!



Leaving from Victoria



Luxor

How has the pandemic changed the landscape of travel?

Until a few years ago we were very much in an era of fast, frequent travel and guilt-free consumption. Today, discerning travellers are looking for meaningful, purposeful, sustainable and immersive experiences and authenticity is more important than it has ever been. Slow travel onboard British Pullman very much fits this demand. I also think that for our local guests, given the challenges around international travel, people have realised that travel isn't always a matter of venturing to a new destination. Sometimes revisiting the same place with new perspectives can lead you to a new discovery.

If anything, the last few years have taught me this: embrace your journey. It's not always about the destination. Don't be the one left standing on the platform when the train departs.





Ekin Sarachoglou is the Victoria BID's lead ambassador, monitoring the area and providing guidance and support to more than 300 people every day with the help of his multilingual, first aid-trained team

BY ALICE CAIRNS

What does the role of ambassador involve?

It's a busy job! We have a kiosk at Victoria Station, and we'll help people get to where they need to go. Sometimes that means making recommendations, or helping people plan their day out, including where they'll eat and what they'll do. We also patrol the area, checking that everything is as it should be and reporting any environmental problems or repairs that need to be made. Once a month we meet with local businesses to find out what's new and to discuss how we can support them.



never go wrong by sending them to Cardinal Place or Nova! My personal favourite restaurant is Bill's in Cardinal Place. I'd even go there alone, because I love the atmosphere.

... spot for drinks?

Market Halls is great because there are so many different options.

... coffee shop?

I like the small coffee shops! The smaller the shop, the better it tastes. Terminus Place has good options.

... place to spend time?

Eccleston Yards. There's a real mix of things to do – some shops, some cafes, some restaurants – and there's always something going on in the centre. I've seen open-air movie nights, yoga, sunbeds... it's such a fun place. I also love Grosvenor Gardens.





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