

Bite

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Autumn 2026

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Kilbeck's Lancashire is a traditional farmhouse cheese, made in the heart of our once and small holding in sparse Somerset. *Finest, full-flavoured.*

Seconds - It goes like this, wonderful, better
I've seen until spot natural. Ye seemed the
Blossoms. Goshen after in heart, I'm not sure if
the 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10-11-12-13-14-15-16-17-18-19-20-21-22-23-24-25-26-27-28-29-30-31-32-33-34-35-36-37-38-39-40-41-42-43-44-45-46-47-48-49-50-51-52-53-54-55-56-57-58-59-60-61-62-63-64-65-66-67-68-69-70-71-72-73-74-75-76-77-78-79-80-81-82-83-84-85-86-87-88-89-90-91-92-93-94-95-96-97-98-99-100-101-102-103-104-105-106-107-108-109-110-111-112-113-114-115-116-117-118-119-120-121-122-123-124-125-126-127-128-129-130-131-132-133-134-135-136-137-138-139-140-141-142-143-144-145-146-147-148-149-150-151-152-153-154-155-156-157-158-159-160-161-162-163-164-165-166-167-168-169-170-171-172-173-174-175-176-177-178-179-180-181-182-183-184-185-186-187-188-189-190-191-192-193-194-195-196-197-198-199-200-201-202-203-204-205-206-207-208-209-210-211-212-213-214-215-216-217-218-219-220-221-222-223-224-225-226-227-228-229-230-231-232-233-234-235-236-237-238-239-240-241-242-243-244-245-246-247-248-249-250-251-252-253-254-255-256-257-258-259-260-261-262-263-264-265-266-267-268-269-270-271-272-273-274-275-276-277-278-279-280-281-282-283-284-285-286-287-288-289-290-291-292-293-294-295-296-297-298-299-300-301-302-303-304-305-306-307-308-309-310-311-312-313-314-315-316-317-318-319-320-321-322-323-324-325-326-327-328-329-330-331-332-333-334-335-336-337-338-339-340-341-342-343-344-345-346-347-348-349-350-351-352-353-354-355-356-357-358-359-360-361-362-363-364-365-366-367-368-369-370-371-372-373-374-375-376-377-378-379-380-381-382-383-384-385-386-387-388-389-390-391-392-393-394-395-396-397-398-399-400-401-402-403-404-405-406-407-408-409-410-411-412-413-414-415-416-417-418-419-420-421-422-423-424-425-426-427-428-429-430-431-432-433-434-435-436-437-438-439-440-441-442-443-444-445-446-447-448-449-450-451-452-453-454-455-456-457-458-459-460-461-462-463-464-465-466-467-468-469-470-471-472-473-474-475-476-477-478-479-480-481-482-483-484-485-486-487-488-489-490-491-492-493-494-495-496-497-498-499-500-501-502-503-504-505-506-507-508-509-510-511-512-513-514-515-516-517-518-519-520-521-522-523-524-525-526-527-528-529-530-531-532-533-534-535-536-537-538-539-540-541-542-543-544-545-546-547-548-549-550-551-552-553-554-555-556-557-558-559-560-561-562-563-564-565-566-567-568-569-570-571-572-573-574-575-576-577-578-579-580-581-582-583-584-585-586-587-588-589-590-591-592-593-594-595-596-597-598-599-600-601-602-603-604-605-606-607-608-609-610-611-612-613-614-615-616-617-618-619-620-621-622-623-624-625-626-627-628-629-630-631-632-633-634-635-636-637-638-639-640-641-642-643-644-645-646-647-648-649-650-651-652-653-654-655-656-657-658-659-660-661-662-663-664-665-666-667-668-669-670-671-672-673-674-675-676-677-678-679-680-681-682-683-684-685-686-687-688-689-690-691-692-693-694-695-696-697-698-699-700-701-702-703-704-705-706-707-708-709-710-711-712-713-714-715-716-717-718-719-720-721-722-723-724-725-726-727-728-729-730-731-732-733-734-735-736-737-738-739-740-741-742-743-744-745-746-747-748-749-750-751-752-753-754-755-756-757-758-759-760-761-762-763-764-765-766-767-768-769-770-771-772-773-774-775-776-777-778-779-780-781-782-783-784-785-786-787-788-789-790-791-792-793-794-795-796-797-798-799-800-801-802-803-804-805-806-807-808-809-810-811-812-813-814-815-816-817-818-819-820-821-822-823-824-825-826-827-828-829-830-831-832-833-834-835-836-837-838-839-840-841-842-843-844-845-846-847-848-849-850-851-852-853-854-855-856-857-858-859-860-861-862-863-864-865-866-867-868-869-870-871-872-873-874-875-876-877-878-879-880-881-882-883-884-885-886-887-888-889-890-891-892-893-894-895-896-897-898-899-900-901-902-903-904-905-906-907-908-909-910-911-912-913-914-915-916-917-918-919-920-921-922-923-924-925-926-927-928-929-930-931-932-933-934-935-936-937-938-939-940-941-942-943-944-945-946-947-948-949-950-951-952-953-954-955-956-957-958-959-960-961-962-963-964-965-966-967-968-969-970-971-972-973-974-975-976-977-978-979-980-981-982-983-984-985-986-987-988-989-990-991-992-993-994-995-996-997-998-999-1000-1001-1002-1003-1004-1005-1006-1007-1008-1009-1010-1011-1012-1013-1014-1015-1016-1017-1018-1019-1020-1021-1022-1023-1024-1025-1026-1027-1028-1029-1030-1031-10

Independent food magazine written by locals
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Secret nibbler at Camden Market!

Photo Credit: S Wilson



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www.bite-magazine.com

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Design elements from Magnific. This magazine is printed on sustainable paper from Big! Huge! Massive! Printing.



Mrs Bite



Newsy Nibbles

A selection of what is happening in the food & drink landscape –
find full stories and reviews at bite-magazine.com



kinda chic when people believe in something that started as just an idea

Nakey Bakey's debut Scotmid listing brings its award-winning allergen-free granolas onto supermarket shelves for the first time. Made without any of the 14 major allergens, no added sugar and sweetened only with fruit, the range offers a genuinely clean, vegan-friendly option.

Nairn's is marking its 130th anniversary with a limited-edition redesign of its iconic Rough Oatcakes, created by Scottish papercut artist Emily Hogarth. Her handcrafted illustration elevates the humble oat into a bold centrepiece, echoing the brand's long-standing commitment to simplicity, quality and Scottish heritage. The special pack rolls out as part of Nairn's wider celebration of its enduring place in British food culture.



Stranraer Oyster Festival returns 11–13 September 2026, bringing its strongest lineup yet, headlined by *Outlander* star Sam Heughan and a full cast of returning celebrity chefs. Favourites Tony Singh, Matt Tebbutt, Rosemary Shrager and Julie Lin are back, joined by newcomers Tony Pierce and podcaster Noby Leong. With VIP Weekend Tickets now available and the Scottish Oyster Shucking Championship opening for entries, the 2026 festival promises a standout celebration of Scotland's last wild native oyster fishery.



Asu, the latest project from the team behind Glasgow's Five March, opened at Brown's of Leith in July, bringing a bright, Asian-inspired menu to The Shore. The launch on 24 July introduced Joanna Nethery's new venture, shaped by executive chef David Cleary's fresh, flavour-driven dishes. It joined Brown's already buzzing lineup, slotting in alongside Haze, Shrimpwreck's shellfish bar and Civerinos' pizza.



Café Royal is celebrating its bicentennial with a trio of limited-edition menus that revive Georgian, Victorian, and Edwardian dining traditions. Dishes range from Mutton Pie with seasonal jus to Peach Melba and a decidedly retro Pisco Punch. The commemorative menus are part of a wider programme of heritage events planned for the landmark year, with Café Royal positioning the series as a "culinary time capsule" that traces two centuries of British dining culture. Expect period cocktails, ornate plating, and a touch of theatrical nostalgia. You can book now on the website.

Scotland's baking scene is in the spotlight with the launch of **The Ultimate Scottish Bakers Trail 2026**, a new interactive map celebrating the craft and community behind the nation's favourite bakes. Fronted by food writers Julia Bryce and Rosalind Erskine, the trail takes visitors from the Highlands to the Borders to meet the bakers shaping Scotland's breads, pastries and sweet treats. With Carr's Flour Mill marking its 200th anniversary as the official starting point, the trail taps into the rise of Scotland's "scan seekers" — travellers hungry for authentic, local flavour. Explore the trail at <https://scottishbakers.org>

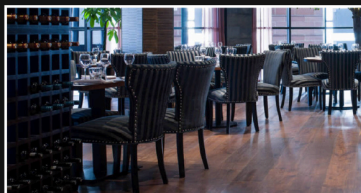


MEYHANE

Meyhane by Sarher is a new Turkish spot on Jeffrey Street, formerly the site of La Garrigue. It's positioning itself as a modern Istanbul-style meyhane: meze-driven, seafood-leaning, and built around long, sociable tables.

DINE

EDINBURGH RESTAURANTS WITH LOCAL,
SEASONAL MENUS AND RELAXED DINING



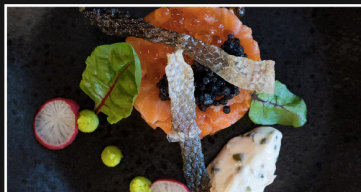
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0131 218 1818



DINE MURRAYFIELD

Nestled by the banks of the Water of Leith,
at the historic location of the
1745 Coltbridge Canter
8 Murrayfield Place, EH12 6AA
0131 374 4800



DINE CRAIGLOCKHART

A neighbourhood restaurant nestled
on the bank of the Union Canal
101b Colinton Rd, EH14 1AL
0131 229 2929



THE TOLLHOUSE

Overlooking the meandering flow
of the Water of Leith at Canonmills
50 Brandon Terrace, EH3 5BX
0131 224 2424



Independent cheesemonger **The Big Cheese** opened on Broughton Street on 1 August, bringing more than 50 artisan varieties, including many not previously available anywhere else in Edinburgh. The shop introduced whisky-smoked, wine-washed and herb-coated specialties alongside classics like Isle of Mull cheddar and Gubbeen, all served from its bespoke quartz counter. Founder Neil Cunningham has set out to create a relaxed, community-minded space with tastings and seasonal cheeses throughout the year.

Glasgow Cocktail Week returns 24 September – 4 October with almost 70 venues, hundreds of exclusive cocktails and brand-new city-wide cocktail trails. Wristbands offer special menus and £2 off premium serves, and VEGA's sell-out masterclasses are back with everything from Champagne tastings to Spicy Margaritas and Old Fashioneds. Tickets on sale now.



Amorino opened its first Scottish gelato shop on North Bridge in July, bringing its signature flower-shaped petal gelato and a full menu of classic Italian flavours to Edinburgh's Old Town. The venue serves handcrafted gelato made to order, alongside rotating seasonal specials.

An A-Z of Scotland... but not necessarily in the right order!' by Jamie Robertson. It's always a joy to hear enthusiasm for Scotland and its products, people and places, and Jamie Robertson's is infectious. Scottish-born, but an Australian resident, he has never forgotten his roots, and, last year, embarked on a road trip across the Highlands and neighbouring regions to document his love of the country in a fun and humorous way. The result is a lovely coffee-table book that takes the reader on a (mixed up!) alphabetical adventure through the country's landscapes and food culture, trying out local specialities including Arbroath Smokies; Marmalade; Tunnock's Teacakes; Venison; Killie Pie and, of course, Whisky. Jamie's own photography is beautiful, too. An ideal gift for anyone interested in Scottish travel, food culture, history and ancestry, and one that's sure to bring a smile.



Malmaison has rolled out a limited-time **SORA x Chez Mal** menu across all 18 hotels, bringing Japanese flavours into its classic brasserie setting. Expect Binchō-tan-grilled steaks, fresh tuna sashimi and tiger prawn nigiri alongside signature cocktails. Edinburgh's two Malmaison sites are part of the nationwide showcase, running until 30 September 2026.

Joseph Pearce, the much-loved Category A listed pub on Elm Row, re-opened at the end of July following a transformation by Star Pubs. There is a fresh, design-led look, a new kitchen and a broadened menu spanning gyros, small plates and elevated pub classics. Local resident Paul Henderson has taken the helm, promising a warm neighbourhood hub with quizzes and new social events lined up for autumn.



Alsace Pinot Noir shines at this time of year, bringing bright red fruit, freshness and gentle structure to early-autumn drinking. Its versatility makes it a natural partner for roast chicken, mushrooms, charcuterie and seasonal vegetables. For those exploring the style, standout bottles include Wunsch et Mann, AOC Alsace Pinot Noir 2024 (Vivino, £24) and Maison Jean Huttard, AOC Alsace Pinot Noir 2023 (People's Wine, £40).



The drinks world is mourning the sudden passing of renowned wine writer and Australian wine champion Matthew Jukes, who died last week while on holiday with his family. A familiar and much-loved presence at tastings and events in Edinburgh, Jukes was celebrated for his encyclopaedic knowledge, electric personality and unwavering passion for the producers he championed. Tributes have poured in from across the globe, reflecting the profound impact he had on colleagues, friends and the wider industry including Bite contributor Diana Thompson pictured here.

Khushi's has been awarded an AA Rosette, marking a major milestone in the restaurant's almost 80-year history and recognising the quality of its refined dining experience at its flagship Forrest Road restaurant. The accolade spotlights Head Chef Irshad Khalid Qureshi's contemporary approach to Indian cuisine, underscoring Khushi's continuing influence in Edinburgh's modern food landscape.



Review: Capetto

Edinburgh's new all day Italian escape

It didn't take long for Little Capo to become one of Edinburgh's most sought-after tables. Since opening in 2025, the intimate Italian small plates restaurant has earned a place in the Michelin Guide and welcomed visitors including Stanley Tucci and Jamie Oliver. Then the team opened Capetto directly beneath it, an all-day café and bar that's already proving just as exciting.

Open from 8am until midnight, Capetto is designed to move with the rhythm of the day. It works just as well for a quick espresso before work as it does for a leisurely lunch, an afternoon coffee date, aperitivo with friends or late night cocktails. In a city where cafés and bars often occupy separate worlds, Capetto feels refreshingly versatile.

Descending the steps from Howe Street, the pace immediately softens. We make a beeline for the little window table overlooking the street, which quickly becomes my favourite seat in the room. Each table is finished with nothing more than a delicate stem of gypsophila in a simple glass bottle, a small detail that perfectly captures the understated elegance of the space. Rustic stone walls, warm lighting and a sleek central bar strike a balance between traditional Italian charm and contemporary design, while the sunken terrace outside looks destined to become one of Edinburgh's best spots for a summer drink.

Coffee sits at the heart of Capetto. Alongside specialty favourites including flat whites, cold brew and expertly pulled espresso, the menu celebrates classic Italian coffee culture with drinks such as caffè con panna, caffè shakerato and, after midday, caffè corretto. The coffee itself comes from Edinburgh roastery Spaceboy Coffee, a thoughtful local partnership that complements Capetto's blend of Italian tradition and modern café culture.

My mum and I can't resist ordering a caffè con panna, something we've searched out together on family holidays to Italy ever since I was little. A silky double espresso topped with rich whipped cream, it's wonderfully simple but full of nostalgia. Alongside it comes a beautifully executed flat white with velvety microfoam and a glossy crema that has me quietly geeking out.

The food menu is intentionally concise but carefully considered. Breakfast offers homemade granola, seasonal frittata, biscotti and cakes, while after midday the menu shifts towards the menu shifts towards generously filled, house-made focaccia sandwiches.



Below Lil Capo, open early till late

We order the Granola with rhubarb, macerated strawberries and cinnamon alongside the seasonal Frittata with basil, tomato, goat's cheese and crème fraîche. I'd spent the previous ten minutes insisting I wasn't hungry enough for the frittata. A few minutes later the plate is completely empty. It is light, fresh and tangy, packed with flavour without ever feeling heavy. Sometimes the simplest dishes are the ones that linger in your memory the longest.

Capetto is the latest venture from the team behind Little Capo, led by acclaimed Edinburgh restaurateur Stuart McCluskey, formerly of the Bon Vivant Group. Esther Richard is the pastry chef for the day menu while Zein Ozer is sous chef for the evening one. Rather than simply recreating the restaurant upstairs, they've created something with its own identity, somewhere that feels equally suited to a morning coffee as it does an evening Negroni.



Fiat Whites and Pritanas

What impresses me most isn't a single dish or coffee though. It is the feeling Capetto creates. It captures that slower rhythm so many of us chase on holiday, where one coffee turns into another, breakfast quietly becomes lunch, and nobody seems to be watching the clock. It's unpretentious but unmistakably stylish, offering something that feels genuinely distinctive within Edinburgh's café scene.

Whether you're stopping by for a perfectly poured espresso, meeting friends over focaccia or settling in for aperitivo as the evening sets in, Capetto feels like the sort of place you'll find yourself returning to at every hour of the day. (Rosie Higgins)

Capetto -
26A Howe Street, Edinburgh EH3 6TG
Open 8am-midnight daily



Italian Vines

Review: Macau Kitchen

12

Bites

Secret Menu Review

Macau Kitchen's secret menu evening in late July was a vibrant celebration of Progressive Luso-Asian cuisine — and sharing it with my granddaughter Erica VR made it even more meaningful. Food has always been a thread that binds our family across generations, and watching her take notes with the focus of an aspiring food critic and chef showed that good food can bring together Boomers and Alphas!

The Secret Menu event was a celebration for this tucked away restaurant. Kei and Hoeyan initially opened as a supper club and then moved to their premises in 2019 serving Macanese and Portuguese cuisine. Various incarnations later they are now serving Luso-Asian food marking, part five of a culinary progression where each stage embraced the region's diaspora and culinary influences.

We began with the Apple Gula Melaka Mocktail, a cooling blend of apple, coconut sugar, tamarind and soda. "Sweet and refreshing," Erica wrote — and she was right. It was the perfect antidote to the heatwave

and a gentle introduction to the evening's fusion of Portuguese, Malaccan and Macanese influences.

The Octopus that followed was beautifully tender, its natural saltiness balanced by aromatic herbs. Erica VR noted it was "very soft and flavourful," and I loved watching thoughtfully commit her verdict to paper.

Then came one of the night's most unexpected delights: crisp, sweet, zesty Fish Skin Salad marinated in ice. The nutty topping added depth, and Erica's verdict "salad delicious with a nutty flavour" captured its surprising harmony.

The Croquettes were feather-light, never greasy, and paired with a bright garlic dressing. Erica wrote, "very light, not overpowered by flavours."

Next was a King Prawn in Sweet Curry, served with fresh pineapple. The interplay of sweetness and spice was spot-on. Erica loved the prawn's "amazing strong flavour," even if the texture wasn't quite for her, an honest critic!

The final savoury dish, a traditional Portuguese Feijoadá, brought comforting richness: beans, pork, blood sausage with pork fat, a dish steeped in tradition.

Dessert was a revelation: a Black Sesame Mousse, airy yet rich, nutty yet delicate. Erica described it as "light and fluffy, like eating a rock," referring to its striking, stone-like appearance rather than its texture. It was a charming observation.

This event also revealed why Macau Kitchen is entering its next phase. Kei and Hoeyan are widening the lens, embracing the full Luso-Asian



corridor: Goa, Malacca, Macau, Mozambique, Brazil and southern China, acknowledging that Macanese food is a diaspora cuisine still evolving. The dishes reflected that evolution: Southeast Asian brightness, Portuguese comfort, Cantonese technique, Malay aromatics, Goan spice traditions. It felt like a menu looking forward as much as back. So it was appropriate that I was reviewing with my granddaughter.

Between a visit from a traditional dancing red lion, the warmth of the staff, and Kei's storytelling, the evening felt celebratory. Sharing it with my granddaughter reminded me how food binds generations, and how cooking keeps tradition alive. (Simone Hilliard and Erica VR)

Macau Kitchen -
93 Leonard's Street, Edinburgh EH8 9QY
Photography by Simone Hilliard



A traditional dancing red lion



Light, crispy Croquettes



Shrimp



Octopus



Black Sesame Seed Dessert

Review: **The Tollhouse***Riverside cooking in full flow*

The Tollhouse has a charming, zen setting, perched above the Water of Leith at Canonmills. There is a terrace, a private dining room and the main room, all allowing you to watch the river ripple gently while indulging in delicious wine, food and cocktails.

I visited with fellow Bite contributor Lea Harris (aka Baker's Bunny) to check out the summer menu created by chef Jamie Cochrane, previously of The Gardener's Cottage. Jamie has globetrotted too, as chefs do, and the international influence shows in his bright, creative twists on modern European cooking.

I am delighted to see the Spanish Ajo Blanc on the menu and Jamie's spin turns this cool, classic Andalusian soup into something dramatic. Served in dark earthenware, the surface is veiled in charred leek ash — a smoky, black film you break with your spoon to reveal the white almond-and-garlic liquid beneath. Poached half-grapes bring gentle acidity, while crushed smoked almonds add savoury crunch. The result is rich, dreamy, and utterly unique; a humble soup transformed into something unctuous and memorable.



Jamie Cochrane



Camille de FOH

Across the table, BB has taken a leap of faith. Coffee-roasted beetroot with cashew cream cheese, chicory, brambles; a dish built on bitter leaves she normally avoids. But something magical happens here. The coffee-roasted beetroot, or maybe the caffeinated grounds themselves, soften the chicory's bite. She can't explain it and doesn't care; she's too busy devouring the slightly smoky beet, using the green blade of chicory to scoop up the nutty cream.

For her main course, she chooses the Brisket al Pastor, a dish so colourful it borders on psychedelic. A vibrant green Aji Verde, heady with coriander and mint, pools beneath an ingot of tender beef, its surface daubed with spiky harissa. What could have been a heavy winter plate instead feels light and summery: a bright succotash packed with beans, pineapple, cucumber lifts the dish even higher. A scattering of pink pickled red onion provides a final whisper against all that green.

Meanwhile, I'm enjoying the Chicken Thigh, roast garlic aioli, vichy carrots, chard, jus, a plate as vibrant as it is comforting. The bones have been thoughtfully removed, leaving tender meat arranged beneath a sweep of rainbow chard. The carrot is soft and sweet, the jus brightens everything, and a thick dollop of outrageously good roast-garlic aioli lifts the whole dish into indulgent brasserie style cooking.

Never one to be defeated by two courses, BB summons her pudding stomach and dives into a feather-light, unctuous Baked Basque Cheesecake. The balsamic cherries cut through the luxuriance with a gentle acidity, keeping each spoonful in perfect balance.

I have the Chocolate Mousse, it has been given a dimple to fill with a pool of olive oil that makes it all so oozy. Off to the side sit misshapen chunks of minty white Aero, playful and cooling. The same care and imagination runs through the dessert menu as the rest of it, no Sticky Toffee Pudding or Chocolate Brownie thrown in as an easy upsell. This is a chef being allowed to do his thing unmuddied by microwave pings.

We've just eaten the perfect à la carte summer feast, but The Tollhouse also serves a terrace menu I would happily order in full, a weekday Prix Fixe, and a once-it's-gone Sunday roast.

The food is accessibly priced yet with nothing phoned in.

This is honest brasserie-style neighbourhood dining at its best and, with the kitchen championing local suppliers, it doesn't need to cost the earth. I can't wait to see what Jamie Cochran and team dreamup for autumn. (Sharon Wilson)

The Tollhouse —

50 Brandon Terrace, Edinburgh, EH3 5BX - 0131 224 2424 - 50 Brandon Terrace.



Coffee Roasted Beetroot



Apio Bianco Royale



Chicken Thigh, Chard, Vichy Carrot, Aioli



Basque Cheesecake with Balsamic Cherries



RAER [rare] adjective; exceptional, unparalleled, unique, special, precious.

Jackton Distillery's first RAER Single Malt Scotch Whisky, The Inaugural Release, lands this September. It is a whisky born from a family enterprise that has reimagined what a modern Lowland distillery can be: female led, rooted in South Lanarkshire farmland, and guided by one of Scotland's youngest whisky leaders. For the Kean family, the release marks a pivotal moment.

Jackton Distillery sits on the Kean family farm just outside Glasgow, a place shaped by generations of agricultural graft. When the family decided to build a distillery on their land, it felt like a natural extension of their work. They laid down their first casks in February 2020, days before the world changed, yet kept the operation moving. Every part of Jackton's identity, from its visitor experience to its hands-on production and RAER whisky portfolio, has grown from that farm base and its grounded ethos. In an industry that can sometimes feel esoteric, Jackton's approach is practical, open and unfussy.

The Kean family have brought a modern sensibility to heritage and tradition. Their respect for the natural world runs through everything: livestock, landscape and sustainability. Draff feeds their cattle. Water is reused. Heat from distillation warms the buildings. "Nothing is wasted and everything

comes full circle," says Jacob Kean, who oversees farm operations. "Embracing the circular economy isn't just eco-friendly, it makes our whisky more authentic."

These practices echo traditional farming, a reminder that the Lowlands were once the agricultural engine of Scotland and that whisky is shaped by the land. Jackton grows its own barley, building towards a genuine seed-to-spirit process with every stage happening on site.

At the centre of the distillery is Jaynie Kean, just 28, Managing Director and one of Scotland's youngest female distillery founders. Her leadership challenges inherited norms. Jaynie's style is collaborative and transparent, inviting trade, media and customer feedback throughout the development of this first release. She champions whisky as a shared experience rather than a luxury commodity. The distillery's community focus runs deep too, supporting people-centred charities and initiatives. A distinctive detail is the box: it carries the names of everyone who helped shape the whisky, a literal imprint of community on Jackton's first Single Malt.

Jaynie's approach has been recognised at this year's Scotland Food & Drink Excellence Awards, where she is nominated for Young Talent of the Year. Jackton Distillery is also shortlisted for Food Tourism Business of the Year and Independent Business of the Year. At a press preview in early 2026, Jaynie

acknowledged her family legacy and shared the artistic spark behind RAER's creative identity. Her dad imagined a stylish Scottish couple standing before a mountain vista, lifting their kilts to flash their rears at this "rare view." A mural depicting the scene is on the visitor centre wall. The playful moment inspired RAER Whisky and its "RAER moments," with "Make every moment RAER" now etched on the distillery wall at the entrance. Then, among the casks sits a leather chair where visitors can record their own raer moments, a charming touch that captures the brand's humour and heart.

The Lowlands have long been a working landscape, shaped by farming and, later, by legal distilling. After the Wash Act of 1784 split Scotland into two tax zones and placed heavier duties on Lowland producers, distillers here responded with scale and efficiency. Bigger equipment and cleaner, lighter spirit became the regional hallmark, a style born more from economics than romance. Jackton's modern approach nods to that tradition. The spirit is shaped by its Lowland setting and by the same practical mindset that once defined the region, even as the Uisge Beatha itself moves in a more contemporary direction.

This whisky arrives as the culmination of a patient process. The family took their time selecting the right casks and waited until the whisky was at its best maturation. RAER Single Malt Scotch Whisky, The Inaugural Release, is drawn from Bourbon,



Pedro Ximénez, Amontillado and Oloroso casks, a combination that brings depth without heaviness.

- **Nose:** fruitcake, fig, sultana
- **Palate:** dark fruits, treacle, roasted nuts
- **Finish:** long, mellow, with toffee, sweet spice and soft oak

Bottled at 48.7% ABV, natural colour and non-chill filtered, the whisky is limited to 6,000 hand-numbered bottles and priced at £68.

Jackton Distillery has quickly become one of Scotland's most

promising new whisky producers because it feels open, accessible and rooted in place and people. Jaynie puts it simply: "Whisky should feel special, but it should never feel closed off."

The Inaugural Release embodies that ethos. Collectable, yes, but made to be opened, shared and remembered. (Sharon Wilson).

Bottles are available to pre-order at raer.co.uk



Review: **Mandorle**

Inspired by Italy, Crafted in Scotland, Loved by All

Mandorle is Italian for almonds, and it's this humble ingredient that inspired Scottish baker John Fairgrieve to bring the flavours of Italian pasticceria into his own kitchen. In Sicily, almonds are a way of life: naturally perfumed, sweet, and central to centuries of baking tradition. In the UK, we've travelled far from pastel sugared almonds tucked into wedding favours, and today's market craves sophistication — something John's pasticceria-style cakes deliver with ease.

On his website, John celebrates Sicily as the undisputed home of pasta di mandorla, the almond paste that forms the base of his Fior di Mandorla — al limone. He describes the experience with unmistakable affection: "As you bite into the firm exterior, you can feel the warmth of the South and soft, cake-like texture of the whole egg in the dough. The lemon is not overpowering and gives a light freshness with a real hint of Sicily, which gives way to a rich almond finish." Crafted with just three ingredients — almonds, sugar, and eggs — plus natural flavourings and no nasties, these handmade bites are gluten- and dairy-free. The result is a delicate, fragrant treat filled with squidgy almond paste, perfect as a petit four or a light indulgence.



John's wider range reflects the breadth of Italy's regional baking traditions. His Gavi cakes are orange-scented and inspired by the town of Gavi in Piemonte, pairing beautifully with caffè crema or dessert wine. Nuvole — meaning



"cloud" — offers a light, airy mouthfeel where almond meets luxurious pieces of apricot. Cuori al Ciliegia draws on a recipe from Emilia Romagna, each heart hiding a ruby-red Marasca cherry for a bakewell with a difference. And Ricciarelli honour the world-famous delicacy from Siena in Toscana, with a thin, crisp exterior that gives way to a soft, airy centre releasing orange blossom fragrance — a recipe with centuries of history behind it.

Alongside these classics, John enjoys experimenting and creating seasonal specialities for his roster of local markets. His latest invention, Red Volcanoes, are particularly irresistible: a sophisticated twist on a bakewell, filled with an explosive centre of raspberry jam that delivers a sweet, indulgent hit. He also has Hazelnut and Black Forest plus Xmas Pudding flavours planned.

These sweet specialties are ideal for festive pantries and year-round treating, whether enjoyed with coffee, shared with guests, or gifted to someone who appreciates artisanal baking. Mandorle treats are available online and at select markets, including Linlithgow Artisan Market on the first Saturday of each month. (Sharon Wilson)

biscotti@mandorle.co.uk — 07880 780059

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Review: **Lennox**

Unapologetic, Indulgent Cooking

Nico Simeone is a culinary David Bowie; he has the ability to evolve his style without losing his ideas and philosophy. Lennox, named for his childhood football team, is a swagger back to boyhood freedom and raw energy. Six by Nico on Queensferry Street has been stripped back and rebuilt; it's sleek, intimate, atmospheric-sexy, but no less sassy. The food is unmitigated, uncompromising indulgence, so come with an empty belly.

Mr H and I open with cocktails and let our server talk us into four small plates, a main and a couple of sides. My pick, a Rhubarb and Custard number that looks like it wandered in from the dessert menu, somehow earns its place next to the juicy, chilli-spiked Gordal Olives and the downright slutty Devils-on-Horseback with liver parfait and maple. Sweet and salty is the oldest trick in the book, but the dates and pâté turn it into full-blown umami sin.

The Buffalo Squid has me in raptures: soft as angels' breath, filthy as a harlot, and the pickled celery is a revelation, but the nori ranch sauce gets lost. Voluptuous Mussels recline on a charred sourdough pillow under a punchy nduja and tomato blanket. The spicing is balanced, the bivalves don't have to compete for dominance, each element has its own voice. Nico provides us with two extra dishes, one of his signatures, Gnocchi, Chicken Wings, Cacio e Pepe, and a Potato Terrine with Pickled Onion, Yolk Jam and Warm Tartare. Now this is where indulgence goes into overdrive; both come with really rich sauces. In fact, the chicken comes with three – a reduced chicken jus, a Pecorino Romano mousse and a huge amount of incredible beurre blanc. Although delicious, it is just too much. There are a couple of glitches with the spud, we find the yolk jam on the salty side, and, although the pickled veg cuts through the tartare, it is a tad too acidic.

For mains, the Half Dry-Aged Duck with Panang Sauce, Lennox Chilli Oil and Cavolo Nero. Pink, succulent breast; confit leg that surrenders without a fight. The chilli oil brings heat without bullying the bird, though it does flatten some of the sauce's gentler notes. The cabbage has been over seasoned, making it a salty mouthful. The sides of Fried Baby Spuds with a salt and vinegar dust work well but alongside the duck, the addition of the roast garlic aioli doesn't add anything. It would be entirely appropriate with the beef or pork dishes. The Corn Ribs with Chilli Lime Butter and Chorizo, though, are pure firecracker — sharp, zingy, exactly what the tastebuds ordered. Because of the two extra plates, Mr H and I are well stuffed, so take a breather before continuing our culinary journey into the realm that is dessert.

We decide on sharing another cocktail; The Last Call – think molten after eight that is boozy with rum. And the pud we plump for is Smoked Banana, Custard Tart, Rum & Raisin, and Candied Pecan. Butter-rich pastry topped with the most unctuous dulce de leche custard, raisins plumped up with more booze nestled on a sweet, nutty soil. The fruit could be more smoked and a few more slices would be nice.

To say we are replete is an understatement, never more have our gunwales been stuffed. Lennox does what it says on the menu – Unapologetic, Indulgent Cooking, with a few seasoning kinks still to iron out before it hits full stride.

You need to choose wisely from the menu, otherwise your palate gets overwhelmed. Grab tables 5 or 6 to watch the kitchen action. Vegetarians and vegans are properly looked after, not an afterthought. Keep an eye on socials for the dates of their Collection Menu of ten sharing plates.

The Lennox team is tight, sassy, endearing. Watching Nico at the pass is a pleasure. He encourages the younger members of the brigade with understanding, and they seem to thrive under his guidance. There is precision there too, but best of all they seem to be having fun amid the flames, noise and heat. (Lea Harris)

LENNOX

40 Queensferry St, EH2 4RA 0131 388 6666

Opening hours: Tue - Sun 12pm-12am

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Signature Gnocchi, Chicken Wings, Cacio e Pepe



Buffalo Squid, Nori Ranch Sauce, Pickled Celery



Nico Someone at the pass

Review: **Anderson's**

'Gallus Gastronomy' on display at Glasgow's newest pub

The first question I have on being invited to sample the menu at Anderson's, Glasgow's newest pub, before it opened in August was: is it a gastropub?

After all, the head chef Inesa Dirgincute was previously head chef at London's Michelin-starred Angler seafood restaurant (she also worked at Le Pain Quotidien), and being invited to try her menu might suggest she's given it a lot of thought — a departure, I suspect — from the usual pie, chips, beans and a pint.

Turns out the answer to my question is a sort of "nyess". "I wouldn't say we're a gastropub as that suggests fine-dining in a pub setting and we're not trying to be fine-dining," John Molloy, director of food at the Superlative Collection, tells me. John's empire at Superlative includes the Glasgow city centre Noble Public House, Göst, the Duke's Umbrella, Delphine, Maison, Glaschu and Blue Dog; Anderson's, with Inesa at the helm, is his latest venture.

And would eating at a gastropub make you laugh out loud? I don't think so.

Together Inesa and John have put together a range of dishes that instantly provoke delighted sniggers because their names trigger nostalgia for what Glaswegians might have eaten as youngsters in the 1970s and 1980s. Think Crispy pancake, based on the frozen Findus version of yesteryear; Chicken Nuggets; Scotch Pie, Chips and Beans, Macaroni Pie, Special Fish Supper, Ham, Egg and Chips; or Sticky Toffee Trifle.

This is where the chefs' unique type of what I'm going to dub "gallus gastronomy" becomes evident. By this I mean the food here (served in smaller portions for our tasting menu than it will be in the pub) is elevated, smart, affordable — and fun.

My Crispy Pancake is filled with a deeply satisfying beef massaman coated with a Ruskoline crumb. And it's baked, rather than deep-fried — as light as a feather and made all the more aromatic by a tamarind dipping ketchup.

The Special Fish Supper (which my late father would always insist on because it was a "step above" the usual batter-heavy haddock) is an unusual grey sole fillet in an aged Comté, brown butter and Ruskoline crust - again, light and crispy and a good foil for the soft and delicate fish.

The Scotch Pie is cold crust filled with venison, beef and pancetta, with house chunky chips and house baked cannellini beans. The Macaroni Pie is a firm pastry filled with creamy Comté, Parmesan and



Head Chef Inesa Dirgincute

Mozzarella coated pasta. And the Smokie Fishcake is, of course, your proper Arbroath Smokie in a deliciously robust Mossiel cream English mustard sauce.

And the Ham, Egg and Chips dish (at £26 among the more expensive dishes on the menu) reveals some real haute gastronomy: it's a chop of treacle cured chestnut-fed Iberian pork served with a duck egg and chunky chips. Lamb fat potato hash browns are made with confit neck.

The visual appeal is strong throughout — another departure from the run-of-the-mill pub fare.

Morning rolls are set to be a big thing here. Their crispy crumb and soft salty interior, served with Mossiel/Wee Knob of Butter, are a brilliant replacement for the ubiquitous sourdough and the idea is to bake them according to the time of day and the food they will complement - for example, the ultra-Glasgow Iced Bun, an alternative to super-cool Freedom Bakery croissants on the morning menu, will be served with high-end flavoured icings like bergamot and orange. Well-fired Glasgow rolls, currently having a moment, are also on Anderson's radar.

The cocktails by drinks manager Ewan Angus are just as much fun as the food, and with an equally creative input. We start with a Porridge Whisky Sour, a Highland Park 12 with oat milk and oat flakes, followed by a Vimto Bramble — an intensely sweet deep purple Crème de Mûre and Beefeater serve, topped with a fresh blackberry. I love the rather more astringent Chip Shop Curry Margarita with triple sec, curried salt and honey; the Lang Clyde (a play on Long Island) Iced Tea which contains Buckfast; Absolut vodka, Beefeater gin and Cola; and to finish, a Tunnock's Teacake Old Fashioned, with twelve-year-old Macallan and marshmallow syrup, is literally topped with a

teacake and a wee Coke Bottle jelly sweet. I'm giggling again.

As a wine lover rather than a cocktail drinker, I find Ewan's generous list has more to offer than many pubs. Among the reds, there's a Puglian Primitivo and a Peth Wetz Spätburgunder, Rheinhessen and in the whites I spot an Alsatian organic Moshi Moshi. There's a French Orange wine and a Crémant de Loire and much more. As chef Molloy says with a grin: "We're doing this because we think it's the best we can do," and I can only agree.

Cate Devine is an award winning food journalist.

**Anderson's —
50-60 King Street, Glasgow G1 5QT
Open Wed - Sunday 10am-1am**





The Frugal Foodie

dines Prix Fixe at
Under the Table

I may have just found my new favourite weekend lunch spot — and it's right at the centre of Edinburgh's New Town.

While upstairs 'The Table' offers an interactive fine-dining experience for just ten people at £110-£120 per head, the atmosphere downstairs at 'Under the Table' is a lively neighbourhood bistro. Despite being a basement, the room is bright and elegant, oozing Georgian charm, and fully booked on a bustling Saturday lunchtime.

The restaurant takes inspiration "from the Bouchons and Osterias of France and Italy" and this is evident in the cuisine served and the highly affordable Prix Fixe menu, which provides three choices for each course, rather than just being a set selection. At 2 courses for £22 and 3 courses for £26, it's certainly one of the most affordable lunch menus in Edinburgh's New Town and an absolute steal for its prestigious location and creative dishes. The options change regularly, so it's easy to see why many locals return often.

The current menu shows strong Italian influence but there is also a little of Spain and France in there. The Shellfish Salmorejo is the ultimate summer starter, elevating the traditional Spanish cold soup with mussels and shrimp rather than ham and egg, and the Panzanella Salad bursts with sweet, sharp and fresh tomatoes. The third option, the Smoked Ham Hock Terrine, is

wonderfully smoky and served with a punchy Dijon mustard — even better than a similar dish we enjoyed at Chez Roux.

This first course typifies the food, as every plate is packed with flavour and no sense that the chef has scrimped, despite the bargain price. For mains, the rich Fennel Sausage Linguine is lifted by tarragon butter, while gremolata adds crunch and depth of flavour to the Three-Cheese Fondue Gnocchi. The Baked Coley with Tomato, Olives & Crispy Capers looks equally delicious.

Wine is as important as the food here, with a selection that is wide-ranging but also carefully curated. "We're really proud of our wine list, which we like to think offers something for everyone, from a glass at just over £5, to bottles of growth Bordeaux," Director Paul O'Donoghue explains. "There are around 35-40 wines available by the glass including dessert options, but we're offering something a little bit different. You won't find a Pinot Grigio or a Sauvignon Blanc on the by the glass list, which we hope will create a conversation and encourage diners to try something new."

The Hungarian Furmint at £7.50 is a smoother variety than I have tried before and ideal with the light dishes, and on Paul's recommendation, a creamy German Riesling is a great accompaniment to the decadent Dark Chocolate Mousse with cherry gel.

The best part: the Prix Fixe menu is available 12-2pm every day and the restaurant is open all year round. (Diana Turner)

Under the Table —
3A1 Dundas Street, Edinburgh, EH3 6QG
underthetable.uk

25

Bite



Fernel Sausage Linguine



Ham Hock Terrine



Shellfish Salmorejo



warm and welcoming interior

WINE

Classic Regions, Hidden Gems

There's a common misconception that restaurant wine lists fall into one of two camps: either filled with familiar favourites or packed with obscure bottles that require a wine dictionary to decipher. In reality, the best lists strike a balance between the two.

I spoke to three of Scotland's leading sommeliers and restaurateurs to discover the bottles they're most excited about, why they deserve a place on your table, and how they encourage guests to venture just a little beyond their comfort zone.

The Best Discoveries Often Start With a Conversation

Although their wine lists are very different, Elizabeth, Claude and Charlie all share one belief: the best bottles aren't always the most famous.

Whether it's a Slovenian Ribolla Gialla, a volcanic Sicilian red, an age-worthy Timorasso or a gastronomic Tavel Rosé, stepping just a little beyond the familiar can lead to some memorable discoveries.

And as all three emphasise, you don't have to navigate the list alone. A quick conversation with the sommelier or restaurant team could introduce you to your next favourite wine.

Cheers! (Diana Thompson)

Diana Thompson runs Wine Events Scotland



**Elizabeth
Mellish**

*Head Sommelier,
The Spence,
Caleneagles Townhouse*

Elizabeth describes The Spence's list as "classic and approachable, with

something for everyone, while still encouraging guests to explore and discover something new."

Alongside benchmark regions and iconic producers sit bottles from smaller producers and emerging regions, giving guests the opportunity to stick with a favourite or discover something unexpected.

Two wines she particularly recommends are Ribolla Gialla from Vini Noûe-Marinič in Slovenia and Benanti's Etna Rosso from Sicily.

"The Ribolla Gialla has incredible texture and freshness with a savoury edge," she says. "It's wonderful with seafood, shellfish or lighter starters and is a brilliant introduction to lesser-known grape varieties."

Her second choice, Etna Rosso, comes from volcanic slopes in Sicily. "Made from Nerello Mascalese, it combines elegance, freshness and savoury complexity. I'd pair it with lamb, duck, mushrooms or other earthy dishes."

Her advice for diners is simple: "Don't be afraid to step slightly outside your comfort zone. Some of the most exciting wines come from lesser-known regions and often become guests' favourites."

And if you're unsure? "Speak to the sommelier team. We love helping guests find the perfect wine, whether it's a favourite style or something completely new."

Claude Millés

*Restaurant Manager,
The Glenturret
Lalique Restaurant*



With around 600 references, The Glenturret Lalique

Restaurant's wine list is one of Scotland's most extensive.

"It's classically driven," Claude explains, "but with some great off-the-beaten-track listings."

His own passion for Italian wines began after meeting his wife, who is from north-east Italy. "I fell in love with Italy in more ways than one," he laughs.

His first recommendation is Derthona Timorasso 2021 from Vigneti Massa, a beautifully textured white from Piedmont that pairs perfectly with white fish and creamy sauces. His second is the remarkable Ribolla Gialla 2015 from Josko Gravner, served from magnum.

"It's a truly exceptional skin-contact wine," he says. "Serve it lightly chilled and enjoy how it evolves as it warms in the glass."

The restaurant pairs it with its signature Lobster Toddy course, where its texture and complexity complement the richness and spice of the dish.

With such an extensive list, Claude knows choosing can feel intimidating. "Our wine list is physically enormous—we use a luggage stand to hold it up!" he says.

"Don't be afraid to start a conversation with our sommelier team. With just a few questions we can help you find exactly the right bottle."

Charlie Passemard

*Co-owner,
Bistro Coco*



Charlie describes Bistro Coco's list as approachable but

proudly rooted in France.

"We don't believe you need a PhD in wine to enjoy a good bottle," she says. "We love introducing guests to lesser-known gems while keeping the list easy to navigate." Her first recommendation is Tavel Rosé.

"It's one of the world's most misunderstood wines," she says. "Forget pale, poolside rosé—this is a proper gastronomic wine."

She pairs it with Bistro Coco's Bouillabaisse Platter, where its freshness and structure match the richness of the seafood beautifully. Her second choice is the intriguingly named Vic-Bilh Sec. "It's a bit like Marmite," she laughs. "You'll either fall head over heels or wonder what on earth we're talking about."

Its distinctive oxidative style makes it a perfect partner for Poulet Chasseur, where the nutty notes complement the creamy Madeira sauce.

Her advice? "Talk to us! We've tasted every bottle—purely in the interest of research, of course—and nothing makes us happier than helping someone find a wine they'll love."

Despite limited storage, Charlie admits the list is always growing. "Every time we promise ourselves it's complete, another bottle mysteriously finds its way onto it. At this point, an intervention may be required."



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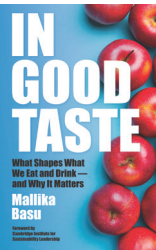
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In Good Taste:

What Shapes What We Eat & Drink
And Why It Matters By Mallika Basu



In Good Taste, food writer and presenter Mallika Basu asks us to consider deeper questions, which may be on our minds as we go about making our food choices. Is it locally produced? Has the farmer or grower been paid a fair price? Has it been produced in a way that cares for the environment? What really goes on behind the scenes with our food? Who controls it and why? Where does the power lie? Why do so many go hungry while others have too much? Do we need to worry about being food secure, with all these global crises, from wars and climate change? What can we do about the vast amount of food that's thrown away/wasted? Is it ok to eat avocados?

We know we're part of a global food system, which brings both good and bad things, but there's a lot to hurt our heads and challenge us, in a way that can feel overwhelming and, let's face it, downright depressing at times.

But if there's someone to make this subject a little bit easier, it's Mallika. A food writer and educator of more than 20 years, author of two Indian cookbooks and curator of the British Library Food series, her style is extremely accessible (you'll see this if you follow her on Instagram — her energy is infectious).

Rooted in real life, where choices are often governed by convenience and cost, she doesn't want to be preachy but simplify some of these big issues. One of the many things I like about this book is the way it's broken down into chunks — it covers Players, People, Planet and Positive, Practical Change, with key takeaways at the end of each chapter and guest contributions from fellow experts. There's also a very helpful

definition of food systems, as well as a brilliant Appendix that provides the meanings of many of the terms we hear now, from cultural appropriation to nature-based solutions to regenerative agriculture and carbon neutral.

Most importantly of all, she shows us that there are steps we can all take to contribute to a better food system, whether that be supporting businesses that are trying to make a difference; being careful about what we post and share on social media (for example, checking the reliability of the source; be a bit more questioning and supporting those who are balanced and constructive; calling out those who are misleading) or getting on top of our own food waste and connecting with how food is produced and sold. That way, we can all be 'tastemakers' and 'changemakers'.

And as Scotland continues its path to become a Good Food Nation, with a Scottish Food Commission in place to advise on its delivery, understanding the food system is something of even greater relevance close to home.

I'll leave the last word to one of the world's greatest food activists, Vandana Shiva, who's wise and renowned words are quoted in the book: 'Eating is an ecological act, eating is a political act. Eating is a health act. And eating is an act of solidarity'.

**Reviewed by Fiona Richmond —
Head of Regional Food, Scotland Food & Drink**

In Good Taste, published by Nine Bean Rows, 2026, available in all good bookshops
mallikabasu.com Instagram @mallikabasu

Review: **Hawksmoor**

Calfreezy X Hawksmoor = The BURGURR

Much as these Bitches love a little fine dining, and a bucketload of fizz, the promise of the ultimate burger is just too much to resist. So, here we are - napkins at the ready — about to have our say on a collaboration between burger-obsessed YouTube Calfreezy and Hawksmoor's Executive Chef Matt Brown. Its saucy name: the BURGURR!

Though not wishing to shoot one's load in the second paragraph, we're easing ourselves in with Jersey Rock Oysters and many a cheeky Pina Colada. OOSH. Fabulously strong and wonderfully creamy, we are LOVING this cocktail. Our only suggestion for improvement? Placing it in an actual coconut, next to a sun-drenched infinity pool, and having it served by a ridiculously good-looking, rather shirtless waiter.

But we digress, in more ways than one. For now we're thinking it would be a tragedy not to try a few starters en route. So alongside a cheeky Vinho Verde, we're diving into a wonderfully punchy salad of Smoked Mackerel with new potatoes & horseradish.



Equally as joyful is the Potted Beef & Bacon. Which you're invited to liberally spread on to Yorkshire pudding, then bathe in a rich, dark, onion gravy. Delicious, decadent, and dopamine-inducing — we're big fans.

Which brings us, finally, to the main event: THE BURGURR — a glorious and limited edition, boasting two dry-aged beef patties, American cheese, smoky streaky bacon, gherkin, and raw white onion, brought together in a soft milk bun. And it comes complete with beef-dripping fries, perfect seasoning, plus a highly recommended peppercorn sauce.

Two bites in, we're dangerously close to declaring: FIVE STARS. DING DING DONG! Because seriously, there's been an extraordinary amount of thought put into this thing.

The milk bun is both pillowly, yet strong enough so that it doesn't distegrate half-way down one's designer blazer. The beef is beautifully tender. The bacon is generous, with exactly the right amount of crisp. The gherkin chopped, so you have zing throughout, rather than one aggressive burst. And the burger sauce? A triumph of tang.

Best of all, unlike so many modern monstrosities, it can actually be eaten with your hands. No compulsory deconstruction. No sauce running down both arms. Just a generous, beautifully balanced burger that — as nature intended — fits into the formidable mouth of a Social Bitch.

Although utterly satiating on its own, we somehow manage to carry on. Squeezing in yet more wine, plus the gorgeous 20th Birthday Cake with Cru Virunga chocolate, hazelnut ganache, and oodles of cream. As well as heavenly Spiced Pineapple & Mango Pavlova with tequila sauce. Both worthy of applause.

But our main reason for rapture is most definitely the Burgurr. What Matt & Calfreezy have created is indulgent without being ridiculous; its every component perfectly curated, and the sum of its parts exceptional. These burger-loving Bitches salute you!

Hawksmoor —
23 West Register Street, EH2 2AA
Mon - Sat 12-10pm / Sun 11:45am - 9pm
thehawksmoor.com



Matt Brown X Calfreezy



THE BURGURR



The Social Bitches

OFF THE TROLLEY

Preserving and baking with fruit

This summer was my first with an allotment. Allotment life is a bit feast or famine: for what felt like ages there was nothing, and then suddenly there's a glut of beans, chard, and berries. I find myself searching not only for recipes (rhubarb cake!), but also for the best ways to keep produce for future use. With autumn approaching and the season of baking coming into its own, I've been experimenting with some of the best ways to freeze, and then bake with, fruit.

Frozen berries are great to have on hand and can be added to bakes without thawing. Freeze them in a single layer to avoid them sticking together. For strawberries, take the tops off before freezing and, because of their size, chop or slice them so they're easier to use from frozen. You can also use frozen berries in smoothies and muffins, or let them thaw in overnight oats.



If you're working with large pieces or stuck together chunks of frozen fruit, running them under cold water will get rid of the worst of the ice, which in turn means less extra moisture in your bake. Some bakers recommend tossing the fruit in a bit of cornstarch too, to absorb some of the extra water. If you're adding them frozen to a batter, toss them with a bit of flour before adding to prevent sinking.

Make sure to increase the cooking time to account for the cold start. For a small amount of frozen berries increase the baking time by a couple of minutes (muffins and loaves). Large quantities, like crumbles and pies, will need another 10-15 minutes.

Applesauce is simple to make, and can be used as a sugar or oil substitute. Replace them directly (for example, 50g of applesauce for 50g of sugar or oil), but if your recipe calls for large amounts of either, try replacing just part (up to 60g is recommended for oil).

While applesauce is only 3 steps (chop and peel apples, simmer until soft, puree), it's an added faff in the middle of baking. Having it in the freezer ready to go, however, feels effortless. Store it in small, bake-size amounts to prevent waste. Labelling is your friend here.

As summer draws to a close, I'm grateful for ways to hang on to its flavours. A freezer full of fruit and the promise of winter bakes to come makes the change of seasons that bit sweeter. (Rachel Edwards)

Film Reviews

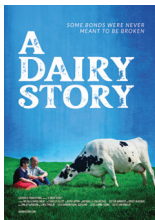
A Dairy Story

What sets *A Dairy Story* apart is its emotional core. Filmed as Wilma Finlay faced a terminal cancer diagnosis, the documentary becomes both a record of agricultural innovation and a tribute to her determination to reshape dairy farming.

The Ethical Dairy's cow-with-calf model is presented with clarity and honesty. The film shows how one shift, allowing calves to remain with their mothers, reconfigures everything: herd behaviour, pasture use, labour rhythms, and the farm's economic structure. David Finlay's observation that "it changes absolutely everything" becomes the film's thesis.

The documentary also situates the farm within wider pressures: declining dairy numbers, rising input costs, and vulnerability to global supply chains. By contrast, Rainton Farm's regenerative, Pasture for Life approach builds biodiversity, soil carbon, and long-term resilience.

Visually gentle but intellectually robust, *A Dairy Story* shows a farm in transition, one that proves a kinder, ecologically grounded dairy model is not only achievable but economically sound. It stands as both a blueprint and a memorial.



Dir: Ian Findlay • Prod./Writer Lorna Young • Cast David Finlay, Wilma Finlay, Charles Ellett • Runtime 78 mins • Certificate PG • Release Cameo Edinburgh — 4 Aug (Picturehouse Green Screen) • Awards IndieCork; Central Scotland Doc Fest; Unisphere NY • Listings: adairystory.com

Tony

Tony is a coming-of-age film that strips Anthony Bourdain of myth and charisma, showing instead the messy, unvarnished beginnings of a young man who hasn't yet found his craft. Set over a single summer in 1970s Provincetown, the film follows Bourdain as he drifts through seasonal work, lies to impress a high-school crush, and stumbles into the brutal, intoxicating world of professional kitchens. It's a portrait of a kid trying to become someone long before he knows who that might be.

Dominic Sessa delivers an uncanny performance, capturing Bourdain's lankiness, insecurity and bravado without romanticising any of it. The kitchen scenes are vivid and sensory, the hiss of steam, the clatter of pans, the sting of burns, revealing the paradox at the heart of Bourdain's later life: refinement emerging from grime. Antonio Banderas provides the film's moral anchor as the Flagship's patron, offering discipline and craft in contrast to Sal, the chaotic friend who pulls Bourdain toward drugs and danger.

Matt Johnson shoots Provincetown in sun-bleached Technicolour, creating a tight capsule of place and time. By the end, Bourdain sheds pretence, admits he is not a writer, and steps toward the Culinary Institute of America with honesty rather than triumph. *Tony* is a raw, compelling origin story; messy, human, and true.



Dir: Matt Johnson • Writers Matt Johnson, Matthew Miller • Cast Dominic Sessa, Sarah Desjardins, Michael Mando, Antonio Banderas • Runtime 1h 52m • Certificate 15 • Premiere Telluride Film Festival (2024) • Release Limited theatrical — Elevation Pictures

What's in Season: The Humble Beetroot

Back in summer, Mrs Bite and I had the good fortune to have some cracking food at The Tollhouse in Cannonmills (see the online review), and amid the delicious offerings on the menu was the humble beetroot. It was roasted with spent coffee grouts, served with a cashew nut cream cheese and it was stunning.

I know this garish root veg isn't everyone's favourite, but I have always had a soft spot for it; it takes me back to my childhood. My hopeless cook of a mother would serve it (unfortunately the pickled stuff rather than fresh) with ham, mashed spuds — don't ask me why *shrug*, and that god-forsaken salad cream. Everything on the plate turned a sickly pink. Thankfully, her culinary attempts didn't put me off the purple orbs of sweet earthiness. It is a very obliging ingredient and has been known to make a decent cake, brownies and even ice cream, care of chef Christopher Trotter's wee Beetroot cookbook.

But it's not just about the red variety, these days you can get orange, yellow, and candy striped ones. Bake or boil smaller ones as they tend to be sweeter. Once cool, peel, slice and arrange decoratively on a pretty plate, drizzle with balsamic and freshly squeezed orange juice and daub with great gobs of Crowdie, goat's cheese or even better, curds from Errington's. Make sure you have a good chunk of bread to mop up the juices. Or how about using it in hummus? Blitz cooked beets with chickpeas, oil, garlic, tahini, salt, and cumin to taste, and serve with flatbreads. It makes fab soup blended with apple; add it to a curry; make rösti. If you're feeling adventurous, how about a soufflé, risotto or a tatin? You see, my dear readers, it is a very versatile veggie and it will brighten up even the most dreich of autumn days.

Be brave, be bold, be beetroot! (Lea Harris)

Get in touch with Lea on IG @BakersBunny

Beetroot roasted in coffee at The Tollhouse



What Else is in my Basket

Grouse, hare, partridge, rabbit, red deer, snipe, wild duck, woodcock, wood pigeon, crab, grey mullet, herring, John Dory, langoustine, lemon sole, lobster, mackerel, mussels, plaice, scallops, sea trout, skate, spoons, squid, turbot, wild sea bass, wild trout, artichokes, beetroot, ceps, chanterelles, chicory, cobnuts, courgettes, dulce, French beans, kale, kohlrabi, lemon verbena, mangetout, peas, pumpkins, runner beans, samphire, shallots, spinach, sweetcorn, tomatoes, truffles, apples, apricots, blackcurrants, blueberries, blueberry, brambles, damsons, elderberries, gooseberries, greengages, figs, loganberries, nectarines, peaches, pears, plums, raspberries, redcurrants, rosehips, rowanberries, sloes, strawberries.



Review: **Woodlea Stables Farm Shop**

From sourdough weekends to film-inspired feasts

For years, Woodlea Stables in Crossgates, Fife was a small operation and the kind of place where great sourdough drew word-of-mouth and weekend queues. Today, under the stewardship of Raymond Fagan and his wife Michelle, Woodlea has grown into a full farm shop and café without losing that homestead feel. The setting is rolling Fife farmland; the welcome is warm; great food made with local ingredients is the focus.

Raymond is an enthusiastic cook with a background in finance, and when you speak to him you hear the European travelogue behind his dishes, especially Spain. When I chatted with him one Saturday morning, he poured me freshly made horchata; an exciting alternative to your usual hot beverage and indicative of an adventurous kitchen mindset.

His themed BYOB evenings have become a local fixture, and eventually I made it to one: a Saturday-night tasting menu built around films. For £45 you get around ten tapas-sized courses, generous, sociable, and full of imagination.



The menu opens with Woodlea's staples: focaccia and sourdough, plus a disc of heady truffle butter. Then the film references begin.

A Clockwork Orange: a deep, offally, umami-rich chicken parfait with orange demi-glace gel.

Anchorman II — *Chicken of the Cave*: wings lacquered in hot cherry sauce.

Jaws: salmon rillettes with caviar and that criminally underused herb, tarragon.

Ratatouille: or rather its Mediterranean cousin, Caponata — aubergine, celery, onions, tomatoes, olives and capers, tasting unmistakably of Sicily.

Cocktails follow the cinematic logic: martinis (stirred) and White Russians, naturally.

Then comes spaghetti and meatballs with a cloud of Parmesan espuma; a Big Kahuna Burger brightened by a natural citrus "sprite" that cuts through the fat; a grilled cheese stacked with mozzarella, Comté and cheddar; and finally, puddings.

What stands out in Raymond's food is the quality of the ingredients, almost all local; the attention to detail; and the imagination that can only come from someone who genuinely loves food and wants to share that love. Perhaps that's why the menu feels so generous. It's priced for the community. Watch socials for future tasting events. (Sharon Wilson)

Woodlea Stables —Dunfermline KY11 7ER
Open Friday-Sunday 9am-3pm



Our Partners

Restaurants

Brasseries & Bistros

Bistro Du Vin — Inside Hotel Du Vin. French-inspired classics such as Moules marinière, Chateaubriand, Crème Brûlée, Scallops Lyonnaise, and much more; all served in a cosy, laidback bistro setting. Open for breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea, dinner & Sunday brunch. Expert sommeliers have chosen the most quaffable wines from around the world to complement the great food. Enjoy an excellent range of whisky too in the 'whisky snug'. Outdoor terrace area. Simply kick back, relax, and enjoy! **11 Bristo Pl, EH1 1EZ - 0131 285 1479**

Dine — (above the Traverse Theatre), is a relaxed multi award brasserie-style dining and drinking venue in the heart of the city centre. The venue also features a smart cocktail and champagne lounge with classic and innovative drinks served with style. Executive Chef Stuart Muir, (formerly of Harvey Nichols, The Old Course Hotel, St.Andrews, and Michelin-starred), presents dining at its very best and is a passionate advocate of Scottish produce. There are à la carte and market menus every day. **Saltire Court (1st floor), 10 Cambridge St, Edinburgh EH1 2ED - 0131 218 1818 email restaurant@dine.scot - dineedinburgh.co.uk**

Dine Craiglockhart — nestled on the bank of the Union Canal, you will find this chic and polished fourth member of the Dine family of restaurants. Open daily from 8.30 am serving breakfasts, coffees, brunch and lunches, and evening meals. Be sure to check out the lunchtime and fixed menus serving Mon-Sat 12pm / 6pm; Sun 1pm – 6pm (roast included). **101B Colinton Road, Edinburgh, EH14 1AL 0131 229 2929 craiglockhart.scot**

Dine Murrayfield — is a neighbourhood sibling of Dine in the city centre. This restaurant is nestled by the Water of Leith within the vicinity of Murrayfield Stadium and is open every day for breakfast, brunch, lunch and dinner. Menus are designed by Executive Chef and Award-Winning Chef Stuart

Muir and put Scottish produce firmly centre stage. Winner of 'Best Neighbourhood Restaurant 2021', the venue is smart, light and airy with a leafy outlook. **Dine Murrayfield Limited, 8 Murrayfield Place, Edinburgh, EH12 6AA - 0131 374 4800 - murrayfield.scot | restaurant@murrayfield.scot**

The Tollhouse — This restaurant boasts a spectacular setting and perched above the Water of Leith in the Canonmills neighbourhood. Relax and watch the river flow from the upper-level dining room or sip a sundowner of your choice and the heated outdoor terrace. Bookings are required. **50 Brandon Terrace, Edinburgh EH3 5BX - 0131 224 2424 - www.tollhouse.scot / restaurant@tollhouse.scot**

The Walnut — Located halfway down Leith Walk this bijou Bistro has a top-notch reputation for seasonal dishes cooked with flair and local produce. The restaurant is tastefully decorated with a warm, welcoming ambience. The menu changes regularly but the signature dessert 'The Walnut Whip' is a must-have permanent feature. The tram stop is MacDonald Road. Lunch 2 courses £30, 3 courses £34, Wed-Sat 12:30-2pm; Dinner 2 courses £34, 3 courses £38 with canapé and petit four. Tues - Sat 5:30-9pm. **9 Croall Pl, Leith Walk, Edinburgh EH7 4LT - 0131 281 1236**

French

Bistro Coco — A modern, bright bistro serving seasonal French cooking, including regional dishes and meat, fish and authentic bouillabaisse. Two courses £25, three courses £31. Open Tues–Sun for lunch and dinner. Predominantly French wine list including champagne and Kir Royale. **32B Broughton St, Edinburgh EH1 3SB - Tel 0131 556 8092 contact@bistrococo.co.uk**

L'escargot bleu — provenance, sourcing, and sustainability define the menu and cooking style at 'bleu', namely French classics with a Scottish twist. Patron Fred Berkmillier sources ingredients from small-scale traditional producers and suppliers from the length and breadth of Scotland and grows his own vegetables and herbs at Monkton Garden on the outskirts of Edinburgh. This family-run bistro offers a



warm and friendly welcome and a regularly changing produce-driven menu. Fred has a clutch of awards, and his restaurant is certified by Pasture for Life, an organisation that promotes the restorative power and benefits of grazing animals on pasture.

56 Broughton Street – 0131 557 1600 – www.lescargotbleu.co.uk

La P'tite Folie — Informal, bustling bistro with mixed clientele. Favourites include moules frites, steak frites, beef bourguignon, duck etc. Extensive wine list. Two course lunch £19.50 noon-3pm. Dinner à la carte 6-10pm. Closed Sundays & Mondays. Large groups catered for, set dinner available. **9 Randolph Place, Edinburgh – 0131 225 8678 – laptitefolie.co.uk**

Greek

From Kafeneion to STEKI — Traditional Greek taverna specializing in Cretan cuisine, serving small dishes-mezedakia (everything goes 'in the middle'). What makes Cretan cuisine different? Olive oil, legumes, cheeses, herbs, vegetables, homemade bread (not pitta bread), limited use of meat. Cretan cuisine is one of the healthiest in the world. The location is in a leafy corner of Leith next to the water of Leith. Neighborhood vibe. Open Tues to Fri 10am-3pm lunch, 5-10pm dinner, Sat 12-3pm lunch, 5-10pm dinner, Sun 12-3pm lunch, 5-8pm dinner. Closed Monday. **52 Coburg Street, Leith, EH6 6HJ, 0.5 miles from Royal Yacht Britannia, 01313482919 – kafeneion.tosteki@gmail.com**

Indian

Celestia — A luxury Indian dining spot in Edinburgh's New Town, ideal for occasions, romantic evenings, or business meals. Chef's specials like Kerala CjHilli Garlic Prawns, Butter Chicken and Baby Lamb Vindalooshowcase refined Indian cuisine in an elegant setting. The central location adds to its appeal for upscale yet flexible dining. Celestia promises a sensory journey through India's rich gastronomic landscape. With a perfect rating on TripAdvisor (5*), it's a must-visit for lovers of fine Indian cuisine. Open daily 1-10pm (Fri-Sat till 10:30pm). **18 Eyre Place, EH3 5EP www.celestiarestaurant.co.uk**

Cilantro — Tucked away in Leith, Cilantro is a warm, family-run Indian restaurant perfect for casual dinners, relaxed date nights, affordable group gatherings or a spontaneous curry craving. Signature dishes offer comforting, authentic flavours. The welcoming atmosphere and BYOB policy with just £1.95 corkage per person make it a great choice for Indian dining with plenty of vegetarian, vegan, and gluten-free options. 4.9* rating on TripAdvisor and a loyal following. Open daily 4-10:30pm (Fri-Sat till 11pm).

4 Albert Place, www.cilantrorestaurant.co.uk

Japanese

Harajuku Kitchen — Edinburgh's most authentic Japanese restaurant. Awarded one AA Rosette for its outstanding cuisine and sushi which is always prepared with care, understanding and skill, using good quality ingredients. This light, bright and relaxed bistro specializes in small dishes, ideal for sharing, from classics such as Beef Tataki and Chicken Karaage to more unusual delicacies such as Salmon Nanban, Gomadare Salad and Takoyaki. They also offer a range of noodle and Japanese curry dishes and a wide variety of freshly made sushi, sashimi and maki — guaranteed to have you coming for more. Open Mon-Fri 12-3pm, 5-10pm; Sat-Sun 12-11pm. Closed Tuesday. **10 Gillespie Place – 0131 281 0526 @Harajukukitchen harajukukitchen.co.uk**

Pizza

3 Blind Mice — Crispy, Romana-style pizzas, just off the Royal Mile. With creative side dishes, and a standout wine and cocktail list - all in a stylish, cosy, and welcoming setting. Open Mon-Wed 4-10pm, Thurs-Sun 12-10pm. **19 Blackfriars St, EH1 1NB**

Scottish

No. 35 at The Bonham Hotel — The restaurant is located inside an elegant townhouse hotel tucked away in a leafy, oasis close to the city's bustling west end. There is a European-inspired menu with a distinctively Scottish twist, and it uses the finest local seasonal ingredients. Dishes such as pork tenderloin and poached Scottish salmon are cooked with skill and care. A La Carte Dinner is available on Thursday,

Our Partners

Bars

The Abbotsford — The city's finest 'island bar'. Est. 1902 specialising in Scottish real ales (8) and malt whiskies (100). Food served all day. Lunch & dinner in the restaurant 'Above'. **3-5 Rose Street, Edinburgh EH2 2PR – 0131 225 5276**
www.theabbotsford.com, or email enquiries@theabbotsford.com

The Bonnington in Leith — a cosy local neighbourhood pub open daily with food served throughout the day. Enjoy comfort classics made with good Scottish produce. Dive into dishes such as the Wagyu Burger, Bangers and Mash, Korean Fried Chicken Wings, Fish 'n' Chips and Haggis Bon Bons and HP sauce, (haggis from Findlay's of Portobello). As well as beers, wine and spirits there is also the largest Pisco selection in Scotland and a cocktail list curated by Peruvian owner Carlo Carozzi formerly of bars like The Voodoo Rooms and Dragonfly. Champions League and Rugby on the screens. **Open every day noon to midnight - 0131 554 5824.**

The Burrow — Tucked beneath 3 Blind Mice, is the trendy hideaway with inventive cocktails, an extensive whisky list, and an original Banksy. Perfect for date nights or after-work drinks. Open Thurs 4-11pm, Fri & Sat 4pm-midnight, Sunday 3-10pm. **19 Blackfriars Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1NB**

The Cumberland Bar — Spacious New Town local, lots of rooms and large beer garden. Eight real ales on tap. Plus a good wine list. Food all day Sat & Sun, Mon-Fri from 4pm. **1 Cumberland Street, Edinburgh EH3 6RT – 0131 558 3134 –**
www.cumberlandbar.co.uk or email enquiries@cumberlandbar.co.uk

The Guildford Arms — Edinburgh's finest real ale bar. Est. 1898 (10) real ale taps mainly Scottish, 13 keg beers/ciders, good wine and whisky lists. Food served all day in the Victorian bar or boutique 'Gallery' restaurant above. **1-5 West Register Street, Edinburgh 0131 556 4312**
guildfordarms.com, or email enquiries@guildfordarms.com

Ryrie's Bar — Lovingly restored iconic bar next to Haymarket Station Est.1868. Eight real ales on tap, upstairs lounge / dining and cocktails. Food served all day; pub classics, sharing bowls & plates. **Edinburgh EH12 5EY - 0131 337 0550 –**
www.ryriesbar.com

Teuchters Bar & Bunker — Tucked away on cobbled William Street is a hidden gem popular with locals. One of the most well-known rugby venues in the city with all international & Scottish Pro team games shown live on TV. The pub is centred around its extensive malt whisky selection with around 140 on display. There are around a dozen international & blended whiskies on offer and the famous 'hoop of destiny' for those who cannot decide or just want a bit of fun. Teuchters also has an impressive draught beer selection which is predominantly Scottish. There are 5 cask ales of which 2 are rotating guests whilst the keg selection of 18 includes 4 rotational taps. Bottled beers, a cracking wine list, gin, rum & soft drinks make up an eclectic mix of options for one & all. Bar open Sunday - Thursday 12pm-12am, Fri & Sat 12pm-1am. Food available Monday-Sunday 12-9.30pm.
26 William Street Edinburgh EH3 7NH – 0131 225 2973 – www.teuchtersbar.co.uk

Teuchters Landing — bar, bothy & beer garden – Much-loved Scottish bar with an emphasis on Scottish food & drink. A traditional style freehouse in the shore area of Leith. The main bar is the former waiting room for the Leith to Aberdeen steamboat ferry which opens out onto an extensive beer garden & floating pontoon with an outside bar. This leads to 'the bothy', an indoor area to escape those odd summer showers. An extensive malt whisky selection, around 140, around a dozen international & blended whiskies. The famous 'hoop of destiny' is popular and was featured on the BBC documentary "Scotch"! The Story of Whisky". A great range of Scottish cask keg & bottled beers plus a great wine list, gin, rum & soft drinks. The eclectic food menu focuses on Scottish produce. Food available everyday til 9pm. Bar open every day 11am-1am. **1a-1c Dock Place, Leith EH6 6LU - 0131 554 7427 –** teuchtersbar.co.uk

Shopping

Mandorle — Exquisite Italian cakes: Inspired by Italy; Crafted in Scotland; Loved everywhere. Mandorle is Italian for almonds and these handmade, gluten and dairy free cakes are created from just three ingredients, almonds, eggs and sugar with flavours of Italy such as lemon, orange and apricot added. Choose from sixteen different products including Nuvole, Jaffa Bites (as close as you can get to an Italian version of that other jaffa product), Gavi, Ricciarelli, Cuori and many more. **Buy them online and find out more at Mandorle.co.uk or at Linthgow market, first Saturday of the month.**

Street Food

Harajuku Street Food — Now at Edinburgh Street Food at the Omni Centre Award-winning chef Kaori Simpson serves up noodles, poke bowls and sushi burritos. **Leith St. @streetfoodbyharajuku**

Wine Bars

Le Di-Vin — Edinburgh's most sophisticated wine bar beside French restaurant La P'tite Folie on Randolph Place. Charcuterie, Cheese and Fish platters and light plates. Wines by the glass from around the world. Open Mon-Sat noon 'til late. Closed Sundays. **9 Randolph Place, EH3 7TE – 0131 538 1815 – www.ledivin.co.uk**

L'escargot bleu wine bar — Cosy wine bar situated beneath L'escargot Bleu restaurant on Broughton Street. A convivial and welcoming bar where you can enjoy an aperitif/digestif or just pop in for a drink and a nibble. The bar serves cheese, charcuterie, olives, bread, and other carefully sourced produce. There are also two secluded little rooms with music systems where you can relax with friends. Open during restaurant opening times. Dogs are welcome. **56 Broughton Street, EH1 3SA – 0131 557 1600 – www.lescargotbleu.co.uk**

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