

MUST

EAT

LONDON

MUST EAT

AN ECLECTIC SELECTION
OF CULINARY LOCATIONS

LUC HOORNAERT
PHOTOGRAPHY: KRIS VLEGELS

When as a child my parents took me to London for the first time, I instantly felt the magic of this city. Most of my musical heroes came from here; the city exuded everything that I thought I recognized in the lyrics and riffs. This feeling is still present today. When PJ Harvey sings *On Battleship Hill*, I imagine, not the battle of Chynoweth in 1915, but survival in this urban jungle. And when I listen to Sting's rendition of the works of Late Medieval John Dowland, I think it is not about themes set in that ancient time, but about today's general beauty of this metropolis.

I have continued to visit London and its countless places to eat. In fact, I organised my very first *London Foodie Tour* a full 25 years ago. For a weekend, I showed people the best places to eat and where to buy exotic ingredients. Unfortunately this initiative was short-lived. Back then, people agreed over one thing: you can't eat well in London!

25 years later, everyone is finally convinced that, for some time now, London has caught up with Paris as culinary capital of Europe. This is where it happens; this is where trends are launched; this is where cooking at the highest level is performed; this is where restaurants will attract you over and over: you will eat Italian as in Italy, Chinese as in China, Japanese as in Japan, etc. This book is my homage to London: an enthusiastic thank you to this magical, dazzling city where I will always want to return.

Luc Hoornaert

LPQ NH FEB 26 10am O



NORTH

CAMDEN LOCK FOOD STALLS

Unit 215-216, Chalk Farm Road - London NW1 8AB

www.camdenlockmarket.com

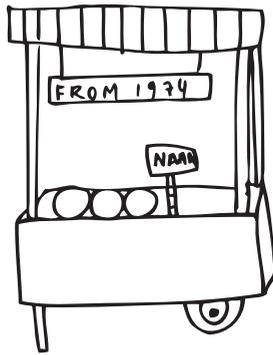
Mon.-Sun. 10:00-18:00

 CAMDEN TOWN



Near to beautiful Regent's Park, Little Venice and the magnificent London Zoo, is the unique world of Camden Lock, or Hampstead Road Locks, as they are officially called.





Food stalls

The Locks are a twin lock system built between 1818 and 1820 by James Morgan and John Nash. It is the only remaining twin lock system on the scenic Regent's Canal.

Camden Lock Market is the collective name for various busy, pleasant markets where you can sample food from anywhere in the world. Next to the lock is a steel sculpture by Brit Edward Dutkiewicz.

In a way, the stroll from Camden Town metro station strongly reminds me of the atmosphere of Venice Beach in Los Angeles, of course without the beach and seashore. The ambiance here is alternative hip; there is always something to see: street musicians, boutiques and, what we are most interested in, countless food stands where everyone does his best to offer a taste of his homeland to the many guests. Camden Market has now become the third most popular destination in London. Initially, it was only open on Sundays, but with increasing success, most stands are now open all week although the busiest time is still on weekends.

Since the beginning of the market in 1974, Camden Market has truly grown into a phenomenon. At first sight, this complex maze is composed of six parts: Camden Lock Market, The Stables, Camden Lock Village, The Buck Street Market, Inverness Street Market, and The Electric Ballroom, a nightclub from the fifties converted into an indoor market.

If you look carefully around Camden Lock Market, you will notice many large warehouses. They date from the beginning of the seventies when the canal was still operating as a heavily sailed trade route. There were also plans to build a motorway across the canal. The result was that commerce reached rock bottom: who would want to invest in an area that was doomed to disappear? When in 1976 the motorway plans were permanently abandoned, the market, opened in 1974, rapidly prospered.

For me, browsing Camden Lock Market is the ideal manner to spend nice, sunny days sampling all sorts of delicacies and enjoying the unique atmosphere. Note that on Sunday afternoons, the Camden Town metro is only an exit.





STORY DELI

123 Bethnal Green Road - London E2 7DG
T +44 79 1819 7352 - www.storydeli.com

Open every day



The darkest day in the history of Italy is probably the day when a pizzaiolo placed canned pineapple slices on a pizza and put it in the oven. Nonetheless, the Hawaii pizza born out of a burst of creativity is the first choice of pizza in Italy today, probably thanks to the many tourists.



Pizza Margherita

Pizza originated in the Mediterranean where it was initially used as a plate. All other foodstuffs were placed on that plate and eaten. Only the most hungry ate their plate flavoured with numerous foods. Tradition has it that Aeneas, the Trojan hero, would found the city of Lavinium at the location where he had become so hungry that he ate his plate. The Vikings also ate a type of flat bread/pizza, a thin crust baked in an earlier version of a pizza oven, then covered with all sorts of edibles.

Pizza appeared in Naples in the 17th century, although without tomatoes or tomato sauce, since tomatoes were considered poisonous at the time. Tomatoes were introduced from South America around the year 1500; initially they were essentially yellow berries. This explains the word for tomato in Italian: *pomo d'oro*, or 'golden apple'.

In the 18th century, crossbreeding created the tomato as we know it today.

The best known pizza at the time was the *Mastunicola*, a pizza crust covered with lard, pecorino, black pepper, and basil.

For many people, the pizza Margherita is still considered the most authentic pizza. It was created by one of the most famous pizzaioli from Naples, Raffaele Esposito. He had the honour of making a pizza for King Umberto I and his wife Margaretha. Inspired by chauvinism, he created a pizza in the colours of the Italian flag (tomato sauce, buffalo moz-

zarella, and basil) and so the Margherita was born.

Story Deli is not about flashy interior and ostentatious proportions. It is about the essence: to prepare and serve the best pizza in London. In my opinion, they have succeeded wonderfully. Even though Lee doesn't dare call it a true pizza but rather a *pide* or flat bread with topping, I think it looks very much like a magnificent pizza.

I had my most memorable pizza moments at Da Michele in Napoli and at Seirinkan in Tokyo; both times, I felt that you do not need to be an interior designer to send your clients to pizza nirvana. The atmosphere here is coy and homey: a great place you will enjoy coming back to if you crave savoury pizzas.

The dough made of high-quality organic ingredients is rolled super thin and baked sequinned with insanely delicious topping creations. Every time, the flavour is amazing! The décor is surprisingly simple and unconventional. I find it very cool and cosy. The front door remains closed most of the time to let only the right people in. 'Knock on the door' is the message. Even though the interior does not entice you to stay very long, this is still a place where you will want to hang out a little longer.

It is no wonder East Enders do not advertise this small hidden treasure. This nonsense pizzeria doesn't even have a sign; this is clearly not necessary to attract people and make them happy.

ELLIOT'S

NATURAL WINE WOOD GRILL MARKET PRODUCE



SOUTH

ELLIOT'S CAFÉ

12 Stoney Street - London SE1 9AD

T +44 20 7403 7436 - www.elliotscafe.com

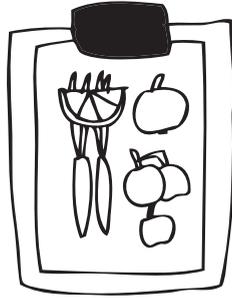
Mon.-Fri. 12:00-15:00 and 18:00-22:00, Sat. 12:00-16:00 and 18:00-22:00

 LONDON BRIDGE



Any talented chef can't dream of a place more inspiring than Borough Market.





Smoked cod roe, winter tomatoes, baby artichokes

Here, composing a menu is simple. The ingredients will determine the dishes to prepare. They are so well prepared that the result is outstanding and very natural. Baking and roasting is only done in a wood-fired grill so that the focus is totally on the product itself.

The menu changes daily; even though it has a feel of improvisation or exercise, having Borough Market at your doorstep guarantees that nothing can go wrong in terms of products. Chef Adam Sellar has a strongly determined look in his eyes. In it, you read that if there was a cooking contest between two teams, and Adam cooked for the other team, it would be enough to look into his eyes to know that the other team would lose.

The combinations work wonderfully well and the simple, although beaut-

ifully garnished plates complement the trendy décor where reigns an unbelievably pleasant ambiance. The place is somewhat timeless and pretty, particularly when the morning sun penetrates the windows and caresses the bare bricks.

For me, Elliot's is one of these jewel addresses that you cherish the most, prefer to keep for yourself, so that you will always find a table whenever you feel like going. This restaurant does not have a signature dish but you will not miss it; Adam has developed his own form language, more than sufficient to keep the fascination and the amazement. Dishes have an intimate feel and seem to whisper at you and softly entrust to you their greatest secrets.

A hidden jewel of a restaurant, don't tell!





HEDONE

301-303 Chiswick High Road - London W4 4HH
T +44 20 8747 0377 - www.hedonerestaurant.com

Thu.-Sat. 12:00-14:30, Tue.-Sat. 18:30-21:30



Do you know Gastroville? It was a Swedish food blog specialising in restaurant recommendations and ingredients. It was also linked to a type of consulting, with references of places where you could find the very best ingredients.



Breast and leg of squab pigeon, almond and parsley, *paste*, smoked potato, black olives, *off* sauce

The man behind this is Mikael Jonsson, a lawyer by profession. Generally, bloggers are people who are blamed because they judge and slate restaurants without a lot of practical experience. Well, this Swede has reversed the roles. I'm worried sick that I won't find another blog like his: he has changed course and opened his own restaurant. And what restaurant! Is it the game-keeper who became a poacher, or the other way around?

The cuisine philosophy applied by Jonsson appears somewhat bizarre to people who eat out frequently. He is an ingredient freak and would practically give his right arm for the right piece of meat or the right berry. When he finds the perfect ingredient, he will do everything possible to make sure it tastes like it really is. Bizarre, did I say? Or is it the way it should always be?

In a restaurant where ingredients are central, it is of course difficult to maintain high standards. Before opening Hedone, Jonsson spent one year exploring the back of beyond of all shires to discover the best flour, the most flavourful raw butter, or the best fishermen. As a result, his single menu is actually a best of Britain.

To know how good his ingredients really are, all you need to do is sample a few things that you think you know through and through. Take bread, for example. Jonsson took a training course with France's best baker, Alex Croquet. Indeed, the only person who could come and judge the quality of the bread was Croquet himself. The beef comes from high-end butcher Daragh O'Shea: pieces are selected and individually aged for a maximum of 80 days until the texture is a perfect reminder of Japanese beef.

Likewise, the interior is exempt from trinkets and there is a wall of bricks, exposed bricks: bizarre, or logical? Oh yes, there are drawings on the ceiling.

Do not be misled: at Hedone, the plates look as if you would need to assemble them later at home; but the proof of the pudding is in the eating. I had the same feeling when eating at Thomas Keller's. Everything looks almost ridiculously simple, although the depth of flavour and the perfection of taste and combinations will soon convince you that it is actually the contrary.

Great, stunning, Hedone.

Colofon

www.lannoo.com

Register on our website to regularly receive our newsletter with new publications as well as exclusive offers.

Texts: Luc Hoornaert

Photography: Kris Vlegels, except the following pictures with courtesy of Amaya, Cay Tre, Hakkasan, Goodman, Nobu (Mark O'Flaherty), The Ritz London, Sake No Hana, Sushisamba & Yauatcha.

Book design: Grietje Uytendhouwen

Cover design & illustrations: Emma Thyssen

If you have any questions or remarks, do not hesitate to contact our editorial team: redactiekunstenstijl@lannoo.com.

© Lannoo Publishers, Tielt, 2015

ISBN: 978 94 014 2482 0

Registration of copyright: D/2015/45/72

NUR: 440/504

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording or any other information storage and retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publisher.