



the slaughterhouse
guide 2006

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very smart dining...

introduction

We are delighted to present the fifth edition of the Slaughterhouse Guide, the first following the merger between City Law and Maclay Murray & Spens in November 2004.

As before, the Guide's content reflects our very personal view of the venues. Following the merger we have now moved into new state of the art offices at One London Wall and, in view of this, we have extended the geographic scope of our choice in the latest edition. Of necessity these represent only a fraction of the venues available in the area but we hope that the enclosed selection will be found to be both varied and eclectic.

The factual information was gathered over the summer months of 2005 and while every effort has been made to ensure its accuracy, obviously, as time progresses, care should be taken as changes are likely to occur in a fast-moving market.

The price guide, unless otherwise stated, indicates the cost of lunch or dinner for two assuming consumption of a reasonable bottle of wine. As a result, those of more sober habits should expect to pay a bit less than the figures shown.

The merger of City Law and Maclay Murray & Spens has brought a new impetus to the development of both organisations as a reference point for high quality legal advice in the City. Despite increasing pressure on all professional advisors, we continue to believe that it is possible to have a responsible and professional approach to business while at the same time enjoying the company of our clients and contacts. We hope you will agree.

Maclay Murray & Spens

PS: The Slaughterhouse Guide can also be viewed on our website at www.mms.co.uk

19:20

If playing American pool while sipping Kir Royale is your ideal way of spending your lunch hour or evenings after work then this is the place for you. There are pool tables on the ground floor with lots of 70's style seating on the lower ground floor. A wide range of cocktails is on offer. The bar offers very reasonably priced gourmet burgers and platters but food is not the main focus of this bar. A perfect venue for drinks and pool with colleagues but perhaps not the best idea for lunch with clients, that is, unless they are keen pool players.

19:20

19/20 Great Sutton Street

London EC1V 0NB

Tel 020 7253 1920

Hours Mon – Sat 12 noon-11.00pm

Restaurant Mon – Fri 12 noon-3.00pm
and 6.00pm-10.00pm

Price Guide Cocktails and pool for
1 hour £65

Abbaye

The clue to this cosy Belgian style restaurant is in the subtext of the name "Belgian Brasserie Beer and Mussel Bar". If you come here to drink a lot of very fine beer (or even a moderate amount; there's no minimum intake imposed) and supplement that with generous helpings of mussels and fries, then you will not be disappointed. It boasts a full range of Belgian beers, which can prove moderately lethal if attention is not given to the fact that many of them are in excess of 8% alcohol content. This is a venue at which to celebrate a transaction once finished, not plan it in the first place (don't expect to table documents any bigger than a beer mat). As implied, some of the tables are on the smaller side, as are some of the little alcoves, but they add a cosy option if required.

Abbaye

55 Charterhouse Street

London EC1M 6HA

Tel 020 7253 1612

Hours Mon – Sat 12 noon-11.00pm

Sun 12 noon-10.30pm

Open weekends for private functions

Price Guide Lunch for two £60

Alba

This stylish Italian is at the outer edge of our manor but is good enough to be worthy of special mention. With its combination of clean modern décor and traditional dishes this is definitely at the classy end of the Italian market. Service combines starched white linen and friendly Italian banter. A full menu provides plenty to choose from including pasta, meat and fish. However, why go to an Italian restaurant and not have pasta and of course, if time allows, a decent red wine. Excellent! Inevitably such a quality venue attracts a disproportionate number of bankers, lawyers and accountants but do not let that put you off. It's well worth a visit.

Alba

107 Whitecross Street

London EC1Y 8JD

Tel 020 7588 1798

Hours Mon – Fri 12 noon-3.00pm
6.00pm-11.00pm

Price Guide Dinner for two £100

Bar and Grill

Formerly the Living Room, this popular venue is tucked away in an otherwise quiet part of Smithfield Market. It can easily be passed by without realising it but, once inside, it's surprisingly spacious with a bar area serving excellent cocktails at the front and a restaurant area at the rear. In keeping with the area, meat and steak is a staple. We had two excellent examples served in the modern manner on a wooden platter with ornately arranged sides. We passed on the kobe steaks at £40-45 (hand reared on a diet of grain and beer!) leaving such delicacies for more refined palates.

Bar and Grill

2-3 West Smithfield

London EC1A 9JX

Tel 0870 442 2541

Hours Mon – Thurs 12 noon-
12 midnight

Fri 12 noon -1.00am

Sat 6.00pm-2.00am

Price Guide Lunch for two £70

Bedouin

Certainly different in its approach. The upstairs balcony area comprises low sofas and leather pouffes which are good for relaxing with a cocktail but rather tricky for handling chilli prawns. The chandeliers seem a little out of place in the generally "Bedouin" décor. The ambience of the place lends itself better to evening drinking/dining rather than lunch. The food is North African/Middle Eastern influenced but the cous cous (which features heavily on the menu) was disappointingly unflavoursome. The advantage is that you generally do not need to reserve a table too far in advance but a little thought should be given as to your dining companion as this place is far from the norm.

Bedouin

57-59 Charterhouse Street

London

Tel 020 7336 6484

Hours Mon – Wed 12 noon-12 midnight

Thur – Sat 12 noon-3.00am

Price Guide Lunch for two £40 (without wine)

Benugo & Bar 606

Part of the Plaza Hotel, Benugo offers a light alternative in a bright atmosphere. The restaurant has an informal area and then a more formal section with a wider menu. This is a good option if you would like a break from steak and chips and offers a range of salads and Mediterranean dishes ideal for the healthy eater. Sadly, it is not a particularly cheap option and service can be slow at times but if you are not too rushed the venue itself is bright and modern and you won't come away with that overfed feeling that your Mother always warned you about. Mention should also be made of Bar 606 downstairs at the Plaza. Again in the modern style, this is surely one of the longest bars around and serves fantastic Mohito's along with the usual range of consumables required for that Friday night after work chill out.

Banugo

19 New Bridge Street

London EC4V 6DB

Tel 020 7438 8055

Hours Mon – Sat 6am-6pm

Closed for dinner

Price Guide Lunch for two £40

Bishop's Finger

A well-established drinking man's pub. If you like your beer strong, your pub smoky and a wide range of sausages then this is your Friday afternoon watering hole. There's a cheerful atmosphere here and take a wander upstairs and you'll find a spacious, bright room with tables-a-plenty and considerably less smoke than downstairs! On our visit, we were unfortunately less than impressed by the slightly chaotic bar ordering system and the food, when it came, was disappointingly bland. Still, depending on your tastes, the excellent choice of good British beers may more than adequately make up for any negatives!

The Bishop's Finger

9-10 West Smithfield
London

Tel 020 7248 2341

Hours Mon – Fri 11.00am-11.00pm

Price Guide Lunch for two £30 with beer

Bleeding Heart

This well-established wine bar and restaurant is a popular evening haunt. It offers a selection of bar food upstairs with specials such as sausage baguette and fat chips. Downstairs is a small restaurant which tends to lack the atmosphere of the bar but when the magnums of champagne are on offer at £30 a bottle, as they frequently are, it's criminal not to go there. The main restaurant/bistro is in Bleeding Heart Yard itself. The food, modern French, is good and the wine list is superb. Booking is advisable at this popular venue with the choice between restaurant and bistro dictated almost entirely by the spaces between the tables. There are also tables in the courtyard outside which makes it a lovely spot to while away a few hours on a hot summer afternoon.

Bleeding Heart

Bleeding Heart Yard
Off Greville Street
London

Tel 020 7242 8238

Bistro Hours Mon – Fri 12 noon-3.00 pm & 6.00pm-10.30pm

Restaurant Hours Mon – Friday 12 noon-2.30 pm & 6.00pm-10.30pm

Price Guide Lunch for two £60

Le Café du Marché

Under the sure guidance of Roberto this remains one of the City's best restaurants. It is as much a pleasure to introduce a newcomer to the restaurant as it is to take a regular. The welcome is always warm and pleasant and the staff cope with good humour as busy lawyers join and rejoin lunch tables, opting to change courses as they go. The food is traditional French in style (non linguists may need a bit of help) and excellently done with a simple good quality list of wines. The atmosphere manages to combine warmth and buzz with professional and attentive service. Due to its popularity, it is vital to book at lunchtime, and be sure to spell your name!

Le Café du Marché

22 Charterhouse Square
Charterhouse Mews
London EC1M 6AH

Tel 020 7608 1609

Hours Mon – Fri 12 noon-2.30pm

Mon – Sat 6.00pm-10.00pm

Price Guide Lunch for two £90

Café Kick

A stalwart of Exmouth Market that, despite the demise of Britpop, still seems to be going strong. For the uninitiated, this theme bar is centred around the esteemed sport of table football. For the initiated, "French Rules" of baby-football, apparently, apply (which we think means no spinning). The cynical may spot that the clientele veer towards wannabe Jamie Olivers and their gangs of mates, getting a bit too old for their moptop haircuts. In the basement there is a bar with more tables and a dancefloor, and in the summer, the lively banter spills onto the pedestrianised street. As you'd expect, most of the posse are drinking bottled beers although there is also an array of different coffees and light meals on offer. Not exactly where you'd take a fainthearted bird for a romantic tête à tête, but highly recommended for a fun night out with the lads or ladettes.

Café Kick

43 Exmouth Market
London EC1

Tel 020 7837 8077

Hours Mon – Sat 11.00am-11.00pm

Sun 12 noon-10.30pm

Price Guide Sandwich Lunch for two £20-30

Carluccio's

One of a chain of Antonio Carluccio's popular delicatessens-cum-restaurants, styled perhaps misleadingly as *caffes*, happily 'mushrooming' (pardon the pun!) throughout London. Pleasing, bustling, informal atmosphere in an attractive large room, originally a Wine Merchant's, which has a light and airy feel in summer and a curiously comforting feeling in winter on a dark rainy night. Open all day, from breakfast through to dinner. Staff are extremely helpful and cheerful. Breakfast might be fresh orange juice, scrambled eggs and mushrooms with pancetta and good coffee. Lunch and dinner dishes include an interesting range of starters such as buffalo mozzarella and tomato and basil salad, a selection of simple pasta dishes and dishes such as calves liver, mushroom risotto, and swordfish. Sweets include excellent panna cotta, affogato and tiramisu. If the weather allows, make a point of sitting at an outside table, in the shade of the awning, enjoying Smithfield's architecture, a leisurely meal and people-watching.

Carluccio's

12 West Smithfield

London EC1

Tel 020 7329 5904

Hours Mon – Fri 8.00am-11.00pm

Sat 10.00am-11.00pm

Sun 10.00am-10.00pm

Price Guide Lunch for two £60

Cicada

Cicada is part bar and part restaurant in fashionable Clerkenwell. A mix of good but dated design, helpful and friendly staff and inexpensive food attracts media and marketing types and city folk alike. Unlike many London venues that advertise a "bar area", which usually turns out to be a few barstools gathered together next to a shelf-sized counter in the corner of the room, it has a large area dedicated to each function. The airy bar makes it an ideal venue for evening drinks, whether you are after a G&T or three, wine, champagne, whisky (the house speciality) or a good old pint of lager (in one container). There is a small area, on the pavement at the front, which on a summer evening allows for sitting outside and watching the world go by. The Pan Asian food is served from an open plan kitchen, which adds to the atmosphere. The fresh flavours and size of portions make for really tasty meals to share, including deep fried crispy fish, spare ribs, tempura, dim sum, pork hock, bok choy with oyster sauce and chilli-salt squid so good it warrants ordering a second helping (you've been warned).

Cicada

132-136 St John Street

London EC1V 4JT

Tel 020 7608 1550

Hours Mon – Fri 12 noon-11.00pm

Sat 6.00pm-11.00pm

Price Guide Lunch for two £60

The Clerkenwell Dining Room

A number of people have tried to operate from this site including Stephen Bull and Bierodrome. It looks as if the current proprietors have found a formula that works. This is a high class restaurant and an excellent choice for lunch or dinner. The food is well cooked in the modern idiom and backed up by a high quality, if pricey, wine list. All in all, one of the handful of really top quality restaurants in the area and, if you haven't been, a must for every gastronophile. An ideal place to entertain the senior partner of a major law firm.

The Clerkenwell Dining Room

69-73 St John Street

London

Tel 0871 3321009

Hours Mon – Fri 12 noon-2.30pm

Sat 6.00pm-11.30pm

Also open at Sunday lunchtime

Price Guide Lunch for two £120.00

Club Gascon & Cellar Gascon

Club Gascon has established itself as a pre-eminent London restaurant. Deservedly showered with praise by all the guides the resultant clamour for tables has created a booking system which appears complex and arcane. It is well worth persevering, however, and on occasion one can even secure a late cancellation. More "feminine" than many city venues, this is the ideal place for dinner with your partner. The food is first class but for those who have a tendency to gout – the fois gras, a mainstay of the menu, can cause untold damage. Next door is Cellar Gascon, a wine bar where you can sample excellent wines from the area with superb regional "tapas" – ideal for a quick snack in a relaxed environment. Mention should also be made of Comptoir Gascon, an outstanding delicatessen which is on the other side of Smithfield. The ideal place to visit on the way home when you have nothing in the fridge.

Club Gascon & Winebar

57 West Smithfield

London

Tel 020 7253 5853

Hours Mon – Thurs 12 noon-1.45pm &

7.00pm-9.45pm

Fri – Sat 12 noon-1.45pm &

7.00pm-10.15pm

Price Guide Lunch for two £85

The Cock Tavern

Out of hours drinking should always require a descent below street level so this bumaree's pub found below the west side of Smithfield Market is perfect, provided you want to get your drinking in early in the day. With alcohol being served from 6.00am every morning, it is always busy during market hours so is just the place to recover quietly and undetected from that all-nighter in the office. Since our last review the dining area has been remodelled and the red checked table cloths and separate booth seating have gone for ever. Although the ambiance is less individual, the food remains good, honest fare evoking haunting memories of school from days gone by.

The Cock Tavern

East Poultry Avenue

Smithfield Market

Clerkenwell and Farringdon

London EC1A 9LH

Tel 020 7248 2918

Hours Mon – Fri 6.00am-4.00pm

Price Guide Lunch for two with beer £25

Coq D'Argent

An established haunt for the expense account brigade, this Conran restaurant does not come cheap despite a set menu offering three courses for £27. However, with its consistently good regional French menu (try the signature dish coq au vin) and spectacular views across the City, it is well worth a visit. As with the rest of the Conran stable, the décor is modern and stylish and the service efficient. Interestingly, it is also open for a power breakfast or perhaps for a slap-up morning repast and thank you for your lawyers after a successful all night completion. A lawned roof terrace makes it a favourite for champagne and cocktails on summer evenings with queues for the glass lift to the restaurant from street level often snaking down Bucklersbury Passage on a Friday night. Definitely a venue to make an impression on your business guest or, so your reviewer is told by others (and presumably provided you're not going Dutch!), your date.

Coq D'Argent

1 Poultry

London EC2R 8EJ

Tel 020 7395 5000

Hours Mon – Fri 7.30am-10.00am,

11.30am – 3.00pm, 6.00pm-11.00pm

Sat 6.30pm-10.00pm

Sun 12 noon-3.00pm

Price Guide Lunch for two £130

Dion

This is a champagne bar so we haven't really focused on the food at this bright modern venue. As part of the new Paternoster Square development it was always going to be expensive so expect the worst when the bill comes. However, as a straightforward bar it works well, with high tables and low couches depending on your mood. There is also a basement lounge which can be taken over for those all-important office bonding sessions (the low couches are the best for these!). The staff are generally friendly, though less so at throwing-out time when their bonhomie and smiles seem to fade a little. Sadly, it seems these modern City bars haven't heard of lock-ins.

Dion

Paternoster Square

London EC2

Tel 020 7248 8880

Hours Mon – Tues 11.00am-11.00pm

Wed – Fri 11.00am-2.00am

Price Guide Lunch for two £60

Dovetail

This small Belgian beer house is so well tucked away that we almost missed it! It serves up a different and delicious selection of food and over 100 different types of beer. The rather basic, spartan décor is in quirky contrast to the jazz/big band background music we enjoyed as we selected our beers. We tried the "unique" and "exclusively commissioned" sausages made with mixed game, dried apricots and thyme, served with onion gravy, root vegetables and a spring onion and garlic mash (washed down with a tasty strawberry beer); and the paprika roast poussin on a puy lentil and chorizo cassoulette. The service was on the slow side, given that it was not busy but it was worth the wait. A place to relax with colleagues or friends – the food is fresh, hot and tasty and the beer is chilled and unique!

Dovetail

9 Jerusalem Passage

London

Tel 020 7490 7321

Hours 8.00am-11.00pm

(Sat 12 noon-11.00pm)

Price Guide Lunch for two with beer £30

The Eagle

A cornerstone of Clerkenwell and the original "gastro-pub" with its wobbly and mismatched chairs and tables and kitchen open to the bar. Menus on blackboards, superb food in portions not for the dieter. A good selection of drinks especially draft Belgian beers and pungent "botanical" ginger beer. Don't forget it is a pub, not a restaurant. They like their music loud, the room is very busy and smoke filled and you may have to battle for your chair with a Guardian journalist who's nipped over from next door. You might end up with the first hand news from them. In the summer you have the option of sitting on the benches outside, adding a lovely diesel-fumed flavour to your meal; in winter, make sure you get there early in order to grab a table as no bookings are taken. It's certainly worth it. Good to have a place for Sunday lunch in Clerkenwell.

The Eagle

159 Farringdon Road

London

Tel 020 7837 1353

Hours Mon – Sat 12 noon - 11.00pm

Sun 12 noon-5.00pm

Price Guide Lunch for two £25

The Evangelist

So many names in the City hint at its ancient historical roots, in this case the religious area associated with the Black Friars. However, today's reality is very different, a modern bar and restaurant on the ground floor of a brand new office building. This is another gastro-pub with a full bar and a range of good quality food. We were initially somewhat put off as a result of the rather heavy handed application of an over-21 rule but once we overcame this prejudice have found it an excellent venue for a drink or a bite to eat. In the summer, drinkers spill out onto a paved courtyard in front, one of the very few open spaces nearby, which even without seating makes for a pleasant vertical drinking space.

The Evangelist

33 Blackfriars Lane

London EC4V 6EP

Tel 020 7213 0740

Hours Mon – Fri 12 noon-11.00pm

Price Guide Lunch for two £80

Fabric

Fabric is one of the best known of the "super-clubs" which has continued to draw queues since its opening in 1999. The impressive interior in the depths of Charterhouse Street boasts three dancefloors, a spacious bar area (ideal for posing) and the much talked about unisex toilets. The club attracts top DJ's (Fatboy Slim, David Holmes and Fabio to name a few) therefore it is always advisable to buy tickets in advance. Despite the club's trendy reputation the crowd is extremely lively and friendly. The club is also very well organised and even has its own taxi service and with the entrance fee at standard London club prices it is well worth visiting, if only to say you have been.

Fabric

77a Charterhouse Street

London

Tel 020 7336 8898

Hours Thurs – Sat 10.00pm-7.00am

Price Guide £12 (tickets in advance)
£15 (tickets on the door)

Flâneur Food Hall & Restaurant

This venue is a surprising treasure situated, as it is, on a rather uninspiring part of Farringdon Road. Unusually the tables, complete with Alice in Wonderland over-sized chairs, are dotted around the food hall surrounded by shelves packed with fine wines and interesting teas which is likely to lend either a cosy or claustrophobic feel depending on one's disposition! The restaurant menu changes daily and offers an extensive selection of starters and mains of the modern European variety, which should find favour with the fussiest of palates. Side dishes are extra and probably necessary for bigger appetites, although room should definitely be left for dessert. Cakes form the foundation of a considerable dessert list and, continuing the fairy-tale theme, come with an alarmingly large tureen of fresh whipped cream – thankfully removed when you have piled as much as you want on your plate. An impressive wine list (largely French) and interesting and unusual beverage selection do not disappoint. All in all a quality dining experience in a unique and atmospheric setting where one can easily idle away a few hours believing one is in Paris. Recommended.

Flâneur Food Hall

41 Farringdon Road

London

Tel 020 7404 4422

Hours Mon – Fri 8.00am-10.00pm

Sat 9.00am-10.00pm

Sun & bank holidays 9.00am-6.00pm

Price Guide Lunch for two with wine
£70.00

Fluid

Fluid bar is a Japanese themed bar with a contemporary design. The bar uses arcade games as retro table tops and has arcade games and graphics around the upstairs room, perhaps hinting at a media type clientele. Dining is on low sofas and stools in keeping with a contemporary Japanese theme. The food menu features various set menus and the usual Japanese dishes such as miso, sushi, gyoza and chilli squid, all of which are very affordable and good. The bar serves affordable wines, cocktails and various Japanese bottled beers, with a happy hour between 5 and 7pm Monday to Friday. Downstairs is a dance floor and DJ's play from 9 pm to 2 am. This is really a bar aimed at the clubbing market and, whilst the food is good, by evening the bar is quite busy mainly with people standing and drinking rather than sitting and eating. After all, this bar calls itself "an excellent lubricant for social intercourse". The staff are very friendly and once inside this venue it is easy to understand why this has been such a busy contemporary nightspot for a number of years.

Fluid

40 Charterhouse Street
London
Tel 020 7253 3444
Hours 12 noon-12 midnight
Thurs 12 noon-2.00am
Fri – Sat 7.30pm-2.00am
Sun 12.30pm-11.00pm
Price Guide Lunch for two £35

The Fox and Anchor

The board outside claims that this Smithfield pub offers 'The best breakfast in London'. Tucked away, it is housed in an elegantly fronted old building complete with gargoyles (do pause to look before going in) complete with olde worlde wooden floor boards and nooks and crannies inside. The proximity of Smithfield Meat Market means that the licensing hours have been extended to suit its traders allowing you – at 7am – to wash your breakfast down with a pint of Adnams bitter (should you have the stamina). The lunchtime menu provides typical pub fayre and some excellent steaks (£8 – £14 plus service charge). In addition to the steaks, we were tempted by the ham, egg and chips and pie of the day with roasts and trimmings. The portions typically are generous and more befitting 'salt of the earth' types than those who prefer a light lunch with a glass of pinot grigio.

The Fox and Anchor

115 Charterhouse Street
London
Tel 020 7253 5075
Hours Mon – Tues 7.00am-3.00pm (ish)
Wed – Fri 7.00am-8.00pm
Price Guide Lunch for two with beers £25

The Gate

This alternative to All Bar One is a good venue for an inexpensive lunch. It is never as busy as All Bar One and waiting times for service are halved. The menu has 12 different sandwiches and wraps on offer, as well as filled jacket potatoes, burgers, salads, and traditional pub dishes. The famous "fat" chips are no longer on the menu, although the usual fattening chips are served. Don't expect a gourmet dining experience, but it is a very convenient location for a relaxed meal. In the evening, it becomes more of a pub, however food is still served.

The Gate

18-20 St John Street
London
Tel 020 7336 6099
Hours Mon – Fri 12 noon-11.00pm
Food Served 12 noon-9.00pm
Price Guide Two £20

La Grande Marque

This well-established bar is a regular haunt for a quick sandwich at lunchtime or a glass or two of wine after a hard day servicing clients. Sandwiches are freshly made with a few other options available but, sadly, no chips. The wine list is more extensive than usual and, with the high ceilings making for a pleasant atmosphere, this is the model for a City wine bar, lots of alcohol and inappropriate little-tattle but not much substance beyond that.

La Grand Marque

47 Ludgate Hill
Blackfriars
London EC4M 7JZ
Tel 020 7329 6709
Hours Mon – Fri 11.00am-9.30pm
Price Guide Lunch for two £70

Jerusalem Tavern

As pubs go this is but a half-pint. What it lacks in size it more than makes up in charm with ancient wooden floors, scrubbed tables and a small minstrel's gallery. The building dates back to 1720 but has only been a pub for some nine years. Previously it was a coffee house and once a meeting place for the Knights Templar. Being owned by a small Suffolk brewery it serves an excellent pint of bitter and is now taking its food seriously with a wider and more varied selection. Its warm and friendly atmosphere means that this is an ideal place on a chill winter's evening for a quick pint before the journey home. No piped music, no gaming machines – lovely.

Jerusalem Tavern

55 Britton Street
London EC1M 5NA
Tel 020 7490 4281

Hours Mon – Fri 11.00am-11.00pm

Restaurant 12 noon – 3.00pm

Price Guide Lunch for two £25 including beers

Malmaison

This cool boutique hotel's stylish basement brasserie has lots of dark wood, moody lighting, and angular lines. Located in an elegant square that is a real hidden gem which is but yards from the bustle of Smithfield Market itself. The Square also houses the elegant building used for Poirot's 1930s mansion block in the TV series. The Malmaison is popular with Clerkenwell media business people. Serves classic bistro food dependables, such as chicken liver parfait and steak frites.

Malmaison

18-21 Charterhouse Square
Clerkenwell
London EC1

Tel 08713326371

Hours Mon – Sun 12noon-2.30pm and
6.00pm-10.30pm

Price Guide Lunch for two £90

Match

One of the most upmarket modern wine bars in the area. Match is popular with young professionals and the odd media luvvie, particularly so following it once being awarded the Evening Standard Bar of the Year award (in 1999). This is an excellent place to start any evening but the best policy is to call first and reserve one of the comfortable booths in the upper area. This is the place for Champagne and Cocktails. The only difficulty is ensuring that, having come in for pre-dinner drinks, you actually make it to the dinner. There is also a selection of pretty decent bar food available, including burgers and noodles. The service is attentive and polite and you probably won't need a lunchtime reservation.

Match

45-47 Clerkenwell Road
London

Tel 020 7250 4002

Hours Mon – Fri 11.00am-12 midnight
Sat 5.00pm-12 midnight

Price Guide Cocktails for two £14
Lunch for two £30

Moro

This lively restaurant and tapas bar specialises in Spanish and North African cuisine. The menu offers an interesting and varied choice although you may have to ask for explanations of some of the more exotic dishes. There is a good wine list with some excellent sherries which are miles away from the sugary liqueur our aunties used to drink at New Year. Service is friendly and the atmosphere is always conducive to having two bottles of wine rather than one. This has quickly become a fashionable location for City and local Media folk alike so booking is advisable whether you are looking for lunch or dinner.

Moro

34-36 Exmouth Market
London

Tel 020 7833 8336

Hours Mon – Fri 12.30pm-2.30pm &
7.00pm-10.30pm

Price Guide Dinner for two £60

Mustards

A popular Smithfield eaterie since long before the area acquired its current vogue. Divided into a brasserie, a wine bar and a restaurant, all of which seem to be much the same, this can be enjoyably busy for either lunch or dinner. The menu offers a full range and the steak and fries are warmly recommended. This is the sort of place we might arrange to meet another lawyer, conveniently situated on the edge of the City but not too expensive!

Mustards

60 Long Lane
London

Tel Bistro 020 7600 1111

Tel Brasserie 7796 4920

Hours Mon – Fri 12 noon-11.00pm

Price Guide Lunch for two £45

Ochre

A stylish bar which offers a vast and varied menu of inexpensive bar snacks, sandwiches and main meals. An express menu option ensures that your chosen meal is ready by the time you enter the bar for lunch, provided that you order by telephone ten minutes in advance. Although the food was good, the menu did not stray from the usual offerings of burgers and steaks and, of particular concern to those with a sweet tooth, desserts are not available. Ochre sadly lacks atmosphere in the daytime, however, is an ideal venue for evening drinks with colleagues who can chose from numerous cocktails and shots whilst lounging on the comfy sofas.

Ochre

2-3 Creed Lane
London EC4V 5BR

Tel 020 7248 7799

Hours Mon – Fri 12 noon-11.00pm

Price Guide Lunch for two £40

Ossies

This well-established café is a popular venue for both early morning breakfast and lunch. The staff never seem to change and couldn't be more friendly and helpful (Mary in particular brightens up everyone's morning). In the mornings suits rub shoulders with off-duty policemen and sleepy looking builders. At lunchtime it quickly fills up, so get there early to avoid going hungry. There is a full menu which one of our clients has worked through methodically from beginning to end (he is an accountant) so on his recommendation try the special grill or the meatballs rather than the salt beef.

Ossies

60 Ludgate Hill
London

Tel 020 7248 2254

Hours Mon – Fri 7.00am-5.00pm

Sat – Sun 9.00am-5.00pm

Price Guide Lunch for two £20 (including tea)

Paternoster Chop House

Yet another contender from the Conran stable. With a great view across the new Paternoster Square development to St Paul's or, if you have a corporate finance inclination, the London Stock Exchange, this restaurant opened in October 2004. Gutsy British cuisine is the name of the game here with food sourced from small suppliers all over the British Isles. The menu is divided into shellfish, meat, fish and pudding dishes. It does Gary Rhodes and other champions of the British classics proud. Lunchtime is a noisy, bustling affair in a typically modern Conran setting which includes a wall to wall open kitchen at the back of the restaurant. Your reviewer and his guest each had a massive Dover Sole which just melted off the bone, although the hand cut chips would have been an experience and a meal in themselves. An extensive wine list (apparently with about 180 wines) completes the offering.

Paternoster Chop House

Warwick Court
Paternoster Square
London EC4M 7DX

Tel 020 7029 9400

Hours Mon – Fri 10.30am-3.00pm

Mon – Fri 5.30pm-11.00pm

Price Guide Lunch for two £120

The Peasant

A Clerkenwell gem that looks like one which might feature in a Guy Ritchie film. All the features of a Victorian pub – big etched windows, dark wood bar and mosaic floor – that appeal to a diamond geezer who is also looking for a pint and some Mediterranean-leaning gastro pub food. Staff are friendly and helpful. There is a choice between the large half-horseshoe bar or, upstairs, white linen dining in a smart high ceilinged dining room. The food, available in bar or restaurant, is excellent. Dishes particularly enjoyed have included pints of plump juicy prawns, smoked eel on bruschetta, confit of frogs legs, steamed baby octopus and (at Sunday brunch) that food of the gods, kedgeriee. Cheeses from Neal's Yard are well looked after and well served. Comfortable, well lived-in settees, a cheery fire and a good pint make this a difficult place to leave on a rainy afternoon.

The Peasant

240 St John Street

London

Tel 08713326371

Hours Tues – Fri 12.30pm-3.00pm

Sat 12 noon-11.00pm

Sun 12 noon-4.00pm

Price Guide Lunch for two £70

Perc%nto

Classic upmarket Italian restaurant. The usual extensive menu covers all the old favourites but with a few modern additions, e.g. salad of spinach leaves, prawns and pancetta. The food is very good but, more for business lunches than a quick "bite to eat". The menu changes regularly and offers interesting items to satisfy your more "pernickety" chums. The writer prefers the upstairs (ground floor) but the basement area is light and airy with a private room available for post Board Room lunches.

Perc%nto

26 Ludgate Hill

London EC4M 7DR

Tel 020 7778 0010

Hours Mon – Fri 6.45am-9.30am

Lunch 12 noon-3.00pm

Dinner 6.30pm-10.00pm

Price Guide

Lunch for two without wine £60.00

Lunch for two with wine £80.00

Portal Restaurant and Bar

A French restaurant with strong Portuguese and Mediterranean influences, Portal is the brainchild of a group of friends who delight in good food. Prime rib steaks and the best chips in London or John Dory with black squid ravioli; tagliatelle with spring vegetables or classic steak and kidney pudding: your choice. And to tempt you away from these favourites: a daily seasonal variety of mouth-watering dishes. In the busy bar area, small plates with tapas-sized portions turn eating and drinking into an exquisite exercise in sampling and sharing. Drinkers can swap bruschettini of tomato, anchovy or Serrano ham with whitebait and grilled cheeses. The wine list is excellent value. It features predominantly French wines with exceptional, rare wines from Portugal's Douro Valley. Brilliant!

Portal Restaurant and Bar

88 St John Street

London EC1M 4EH

Tel 020 7253 6950

Hours Tues – Sat 12 noon-10.30pm

Price Guide Lunch for two £90

Potemkin

This restaurant is offering yet another new style of food – Russian! Not just cabbage soup as one might imagine but certainly some unusual but enjoyable food combinations and the chance to indulge in a caviar appetiser and a shot of good Russian vodka. The restaurant is hidden away from the bar downstairs and has an imperial feel to it with its plush red and purple seating. Service is friendly and the waiting staff (who all seemed to be genuinely Russian) are keen to suggest exactly the right condiments to compliment each dish. This is certainly a venue that will impress one's dining companions and one to bear in mind for a secret rendezvous!

Potemkin

144 Clerkenwell Road

London

Tel 020 7278 6661

Hours

Restaurant Mon – Fri 12 noon-3.00pm & 6.00pm-10.30pm

Sat 6.00pm-12 midnight

Bar Mon – Sat 11.00am-12 midnight

Price Guide Meal for two £60-70

Press House

This recently opened wine bar is located where Wynnyn de Worde was for many years. Tucked away in St Bride's Passage it is well worth finding for the warm welcome (the staff give the impression that they really do care), extensive wine list and good food. The wine bar is well used but not yet well enough known to be packed. The best seats are in booths towards the rear of the bar which can be reserved. An ideal venue for confidential discussions. The menu is varied and interesting and the food well prepared. Sandwiches, starters and full meals are available. The staff are friendly and attentive. Well worth a visit particularly before it gets too popular.

Press House

St Bride's Passage
London

Tel 020 7353 5059

Hours Mon – Fri 12 noon-10.00pm

Price Guide Lunch for two £40

The Quality Chop House

Although advertised as a progressive working class caterer this traditional and now fashionable restaurant has moved up market with its extension into the neighbouring premises. The original portion is an historical delight with long bench tables and high backed chairs which are snug but from an age which was not long on comfort (one visiting client of "full habit" had to seek a larger booth). The bill of fare is traditionally English and both in choice and price has "progressed" well beyond traditional working class fare. There is a fantastic range of dishes and with friendly service visitors are rarely disappointed. If you haven't been to the Quality Chop House your work in the City is not yet done.

The Quality Chop House

92-94 Farringdon Road
London

Tel 020 7837 5093

Hours Mon – Fri 12 noon-3.00pm & 6.30pm-11.30pm

Sat 6.30pm-11.30pm

Price Guide Dinner for two £70

Refettorio

A sister restaurant to the famous Locanda Locatelli, this is one which sometimes divides reviewers. On all our visits the food has been excellent, both at lunch and dinner, especially the mixed platters of Italian meats and cheeses to begin (with honey and quince) and some outstanding fish and pasta dishes. A good bottle of Barolo is an ideal (if expensive) accompaniment. Service is the full thing with head waiter and sommelier. So what is the downside? Only the cost as it's hard to escape with a bill under £100 for two at lunch or £150 in the evening. Nevertheless well worth a visit and one of our top picks in the area.

Refettorio

19 New Bridge Street
London EC4V 6DB

Tel 020 7438 8052

Hours

Lunch Mon – Fri 12noon-2.30pm

Dinner Mon – Sat 6.30pm-10.30pm

Price Guide Lunch for two £120

The Rendezvous

The Rendezvous is more casual than its neighbour Café du Marche but the same standards of food and service prevail. Hardly surprising as both are under common ownership and share the same excellent kitchen team. The cote de boeuf is always a sound choice and the dish of the day, either meat or fish, never disappoints but really these are accompaniments to the fries, surely the best in London. In the summer try and secure one of the pavement tables and watch the world go by with a bottle of chilled white wine – heaven.

The Rendezvous

121 Charterhouse Street
London

Tel 020 7336 8836

Hours Mon – Fri 12 noon-2.30pm

Price Guide Lunch for two £50

Searcy's

This sophisticated restaurant occupies a pleasant space in the heart of the Barbican Centre and offers good value for money in its category. Serbian chef Tom Ilic (formerly of "Bonds", Threadneedles Hotel) produces imaginative "cutting edge" cuisine (e.g. Pyrenean lamb with coco beans, sucking pig tortelli) and is particularly strong on puddings. The service is welcoming and efficient. The wine list is imaginatively chosen, though there are few bottles under £20 and a wider selection of wines by the glass would be desirable. As with everything in the Barbican, the problem really is access, as getting to the restaurant involves a bit of a walk, however one approaches it, and clients may need a detailed map to find it.

Searcy's

Level 2
The Barbican Centre
Silk Street
London
Tel 020 7588 3008
Hours Mon – Fri 12 noon-10.30pm
Sat 5pm-10.30pm
Price Guide Lunch for two £120

Sir Loin Restaurant

Situated above the Hope Bar visitors should not allow themselves to be put off by the worn carpeting or the rather gloomy aspect of the entrance. Once you are through the etched glass doors you will find an upstairs dining room still set out as you might have found it some twenty years or more ago. Add to this a classic British menu, a half decent wine list, generous portions of food both tasty and wholesome and helpful, if hesitant, service, what more could we ask? One or two other diners perhaps, as this was a restaurant previously renowned for its warmth and conviviality! Probably just a quiet day so still worth a visit but if you are eating alone, take a newspaper.

Sir Loin Restaurant

94 Cowcross Street
London EC1M 6BH
Tel 020 7253 8525
Hours Mon – Fri 7.00am-2.00pm
Price Guide Lunch for two £50

Simply Nico

Part of the Simply Nico chain situated opposite the Barbican. A light and airy restaurant with very good French bistro dining. The menu is heavily biased towards fish and seafood although other choices are available but unless you choose from the daily specials, the dishes perhaps have a hint of being pre-prepared. The service is efficient but not over friendly and you certainly do not get the feeling that you are being rushed, making it a good venue for a relaxing business lunch. Being so close to the Barbican, it is also worth considering for theatre or concert goers.

Simply Nico

Goswell Road
Barbican
London
Tel 020 7336 7667
Hours Mon – Fri 7.00am-9.30am,
12 noon-2.30pm & 6.00pm-10.30pm
Sat & Sun 7.30am-11.00am &
6.00pm-10.30pm
Price Guide Lunch for two £45

Smithfield Café

Open 24 hours during the week, this is one of the cheapest places to eat at any time. It's small but has a few tables for use, we would suggest, only while you wait for your food. During the day, it has become a popular haunt for motorcycle couriers who congregate outside by Smithfield Market (probably so they can keep an eye on their motorbikes). At night you can expect a wider clientele including minicab drivers and, on our visit, the crew of a dustcart. Not the sort of place we would take clients (unless they're in the sort of state where they'd not remember) but ideal for that emergency carbohydrate intake during an all night meeting or after a late party.

Smithfield Café

59 Long Lane
London
Tel 020 7606 7659
Hours Mon – Thu 24 hours a day
Fri to 10.30pm
Sat 6.00am-10.00pm
Price Guide Tea and a bacon roll £2.20

Smiths of Smithfield

This popular gastrodome has a bar on the ground floor which is open for a traditional breakfast and is a lively meeting place in the evening. On the first floor there are private rooms and a champagne bar, which is a little quieter than the main bar and ideal for a private party. The second floor comprises an excellent restaurant where the menu refers to "pounds" in your pocket rather than the weight, but is nevertheless not unreasonably priced. As you would expect for the area, meat figures prominently. The top floor has been opened as a more up-market restaurant. Something for everyone! Two of the partners attended with a well-known bon viveur; whilst all appreciated the food and the ambience (the steaks were outstanding), the bill took the edge off the evening even for experienced men about town.

Smiths of Smithfield

67-77 Charterhouse Street
London

Tel 020 7236 6666

Hours (Groundfloor bar) 11.00am-10.30pm

Opening hours vary from floor to floor

Price Guide Lunch for two £20 to £100 depending on location

Souvlaki & Bar

The feeling in this place is very much more of a bar than a restaurant, with its steel/glass modern open plan interior consisting of mostly high tables for diners teetering on stools to crowd around, and a bar which surrounds the central open kitchen. The dishes are small and mostly tasty. The Greek house white proved a good match to most things we ordered, with the added benefit of being reasonably priced. Service was speedy, although it would have been nice to have lingered on the mezze before plunging into the mains. Actually, it would have also been nice to have had our cutlery and plates served to us at some point. The private room downstairs is fairly uninviting, so best to be avoided unless you have a particularly boisterous crowd to entertain. A pricey, but tasty place to chew the fat over a wine or two, where hearty food and attentive service is not the primary focus.

Souvlaki & Bar

140-142 St John Street
London EC1V 4UA

Tel 020 7253 7234

Fax 020 7253 7235

Hours Mon – Fri 12 noon-11pm

Price Guide Lunch for two £40

St. John's

This is perhaps one of the most unusual restaurants in the area and has recently been listed amongst the top 50 restaurants in the World! An outstanding achievement. Truly unique in almost every way. Increasingly popular and frequently boosted by Fay Maschler, the Evening Standard's restaurant critic, the key feature is quality with simplicity. Bone marrow and parsley is exactly as described, a bone with raw parsley. There is a range of meat and offal but always at least one or two excellent fish and vegetarian dishes. None of us has been brave enough to sample the braised squirrel yet. The wine list is exclusively French and the bakery a delight. This is the place to go for that first tentative meeting as the menu will provide at least 10 minutes of easy conversation.

St John's

26 St John Street
London

Tel 020 7251 0848

Hours Mon – Fri 12 noon-3.00pm & 6.00pm-11.00pm

Sat 6.00pm-11.00pm

Price Guide Lunch for two £75

Sweetings

Another City institution, Sweetings seems to have been at the corner of Queen Victoria Street forever. Bench tables and bar seats offer an almost exclusively fish menu served by aproned waiters. Guinness and Pimms are available in pewter tankards but don't ask for coffee as they do not serve it. There are plates of bread and butter and fresh lemon laid on so, provided you do not mind the crush, this is the ideal venue for a traditional fish supper. We understand that the management have finally agreed to accept credit cards but I have never been brave enough to take the risk so always go with cash. You cannot book either so get there early to avoid disappointment. All in all, however, if you have not been to Sweetings for lunch you have not really worked in the City.

Sweetings

39 Queen Victoria Street
London EC4N 4SA

Tel 020 7248 3062

Hours Mon – Fri 11.00am-3.00pm

Price Guide Lunch for two £70

Vic Naylor's

This long-established drinking venue is one for the serious social drinker and party animal rather than for that quiet dinner engagement. In recent months, however, the floor space has been extended to include a second bar whose main feature has to be the cosy, chocolate brown leather booths which are excellent for lunches where privacy is a must. The new bar offers food from The Rotisserie which comprises mostly meats from the spit roast and comes recommended. Vic Naylor's' extended opening hours make it particularly popular later in the evening for the last watch of beers and vodka shots with a wide range of modern music for accompaniment. The staff work hard to ensure you have all that you need for a good time. A varied menu is offered in the main restaurant but the simple things tend to be the best.

Vic Naylor's

38-40 St John Street
London

Tel 020 7608 2181

Hours Mon – Fri 12 noon-12 midnight

Price Guide Lunch for two £35

Vinoteca

This novel restaurant, wine bar and shop gives the opportunity to sit and enjoy a wide range of wines with a meal and then purchase a bottle to take away afterwards, at half the price. All wines are on display at the back of the shop. Customers may browse the shop and choose any one of the wines to drink in the bar (or choose from the list if they prefer) and staff are at hand to offer informed and 'no-nonsense' advice. Vinoteca's wine list avoids the most obvious names and instead opts for a diverse range of small-production wines with character. Shop prices start at £4.60 per bottle, and climb to over £100. Vinoteca's kitchen is open from 12 noon to 3.00pm and from 6.30pm to 10.00pm, although bookings are only taken at lunch time, they serve a delicious and ever changing menu of seasonal dishes as well as over 200 wines from around the world. The high quality, simply prepared dishes are matched to a list of 20 wines by the glass, all of which are changed on a regular basis. The wooden tables and chairs and relaxed atmosphere are perfect either for a post-work drink or for a full meal, matched with a great bottle of memorable wine.

Vinoteca

7 St John Street
London EC1M 4AA

Tel 020 7253 8786

Hours Mon – Sat 11.00am-11.00pm

Price Guide Lunch for two £50

The Well

Another gastro pub in the heart of Clerkenwell. The menu, which offers a good range of traditional food with an interesting twist, for example pork and peppercorn sausages with mash and red wine jus or fennel and tomato risotto with mascarpone and parmesan! The "pint o' prawns" with mayonnaise and rock oysters were also tempting additions to the menu. There is also a very respectable cocktail list as well as the usual range of wines and beers. The ground floor bar is airy and light during the day and cosy and inviting in the evening. Although The Well looks quite small from the outside, there is also a 'leather panelled Aquarium Bar' in the basement which can be quite intriguing after sampling a number of the cocktails.

The Well

180 St John Street
London EC1V 4JY

Tel 020 7251 9363

Hours Mon – Sun 10.30am-11.30pm

Price Guide Lunch for two £55

The Zetter

Cool new restaurant in previous football pools company premises, recently converted to funky new boutique hotel which has won stacks of awards and praise. Italian food with a trendy twist, an interesting wine list and helpful interested staff. Coolly buzzy atmosphere, especially in the evenings, even when not particularly busy.

The Zetter

86-88 Clerkenwell Road
Clerkenwell
London EC1

Tel 020 7324 4444

Hours Mon – Fri 12 noon-2.30pm &
6.00-11.00pm

Sat 12 noon-3.00pm & 6.00pm-11pm

Sun 12 noon-3.00pm & 6.00pm-10.30pm

Price Guide Lunch for two £85

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www.mms.co.uk

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Tel 0131 226 5196 Fax 0131 226 3174

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151 St Vincent Street Glasgow G2 5NJ
Tel 0141 248 5011 Fax 0141 248 5819

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One London Wall London EC2Y 5AB
Tel 020 7002 8500 Fax 020 7002 8501

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