

BARS

THE BEST ROOFTOP BARS IN LONDON

Upstairs at The Department Store, Brixton
CREDIT: JAMES JONES

The open-air, sky-high spots around the city to enjoy a cool drink this summer



UPSTAIRS AT THE DEPARTMENT STORE, BRIXTON

Downstairs, hurried commuters spill from the station, stressed shoppers navigate London's most cramped Sainsbury's and locals collect on pavements to chat and play music. Upstairs is different, a little bit like a member's club, without the hushed tones or intimidating staff (you can either get a guest pass for the evening or pay a membership fee to go whenever you want, hot tip: the waiting list is opening up again soon). You're greeted by name, and then left well alone to enjoy your evening, whether that involves a game of ping pong or table football, cocktails at the bar or supper in the sun. Inside, the design is more Brooklyn than Brixton, with industrial wooden beams and low lighting, and the atmosphere is more [New York](#) than [London](#) too – people actually welcome conversation with strangers. The food menu is sourced from the rooftop garden where possible: a beetroot salad is fantastically fresh and the jerk chicken celebrates the area's cultural diversity. Skip pudding and get cocktails; Remember The Thyme is herby and refreshing, made with Balfour Brut Rosé and burnt orange marmalade. The bar also scores points for stocking Picpoul de Pinet, a French wine I always look for and can never find. *By Anna Prendergast*

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