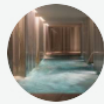




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Where to eat, what to do and how to find Brixton's best bits

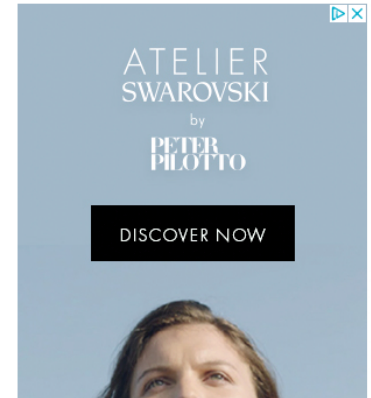
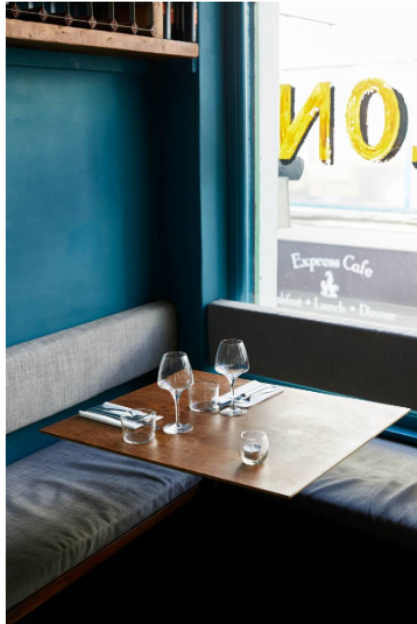


by ANNA PRENDERGAST

Brixton's energy is as charged as its most famous street, which Eddie Grant immortalised in his 1982 hit 'Electric Avenue'. The founder of Britain's first interracial rock group isn't the only musical icon from the area: David Bowie was born here, and a mural of his character Aladdin Sane has become a shrine to the singer since he died in 2016, while Jimi Hendrix is said to have jammed at the now-defunct Railway Hotel. But Brixton's shiny pop-culture personality is the tip of the iceberg, and beneath it is a history that many still work hard to protect. Windrush Square is named in honour of the Afro-Caribbean community's contribution to Brixton, many of whom arrived in [England](#) on the HMT Empire Windrush in 1948. Lower rents and an increase in job opportunities have seen a younger crowd move in over the past 20 years, placing Brixton at the centre of many debates over gentrification. But the contrast of generations, ethnicities and lifestyles means the area is alive; fresh, new ideas are adapting to the area's cultural foundations, and there's

the sense that it can only continue to contribute to all Brixton has to offer.

THE BEST RESTAURANTS IN BRIXTON



SALON

At Salon, expect brilliant, thoughtful food that doesn't just evolve with the seasons but changes week by week. I could tell you about the fresh, zingy heritage tomatoes grown on the restaurant's allotment in Dulwich, or the sweet-but-sharp buttermilk sorbet with pickled hibiscus flowers that you'll wish they sold by the tub. But what I can't stop thinking about is the butter. Whipped, not churned, with unhomogenised milk and giant salt flakes, and served with slabs of fresh sourdough. The set menu is worth every penny at £36.

Address: Salon, 18 Market Row, Brixton, London SW9 8LD

Telephone: +44 20 7501 9152

Website: salonbrixton.co.uk

CREDIT: LESLEY LAU





CASA SIBILLA

Casa Sibilla could compete for some of the slowest service in Brixton Village – [drinks](#) can take longer to arrive than your food, and staff can be grumpy. But now that you know this, the rest of the experience can be fun (really). Go early, settle in, take friends. It's in a prime spot in Brixton Village and is run by [Puglia-born](#) Paola Sibilla, whose comfort-food cicchetti consists of crispy arancini, buttery parmigiana and piquant caponata which are worth the wait.

Address: Casa Sibilla, 66/68 Granville Arcade, Cold Harbour Lane, London SW9 8PS
Telephone: +44 7756 574077
Website: casa-sibilla.com



CASA MORITA

An unassuming Mexican with thirst-quenching cocktails and soft tacos to soak them up, Casa Morita, in Market Row, is an ideal stop-off for a quick bite. Mop up slow-cooked black beans with corn tacos and scoop queso fresco, fiery chipotle and pulled pork onto totopos, hand-fried nachos from [Oaxaca](#). Celebrate the £7-for-three-tacos price tag with a salt-rimmed mezcal Margarita or a minty Mojito.

Address: Casa Morita, 9 Market Row, Brixton, London SW9 8LB
Telephone: +44 20 8127 5107
Website: casamorita.com



KRICKET BRIXTON

Young British chef Will Bowlby's temporary shipping-container pop-up in Brixton is all grown-up. First came the permanent kitchen in [Soho](#), and now Cricket has returned to its roots and opened a restaurant in the arches on Atlantic Road. Bowlby takes the best of British ingredients, seasoned, spiced and diced with [Indian](#) flavours. Original favourite deep-fried samphire pakora is a ridiculously moreish street-food stand-in, while North Indian bharta – aubergine, yogurt and pomegranate powder – has all the kick of a proper curry-house kitchen.

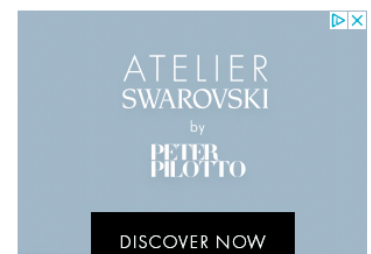
Address: Cricket, 41-43 Atlantic Road, Brixton, London SW9 8JL

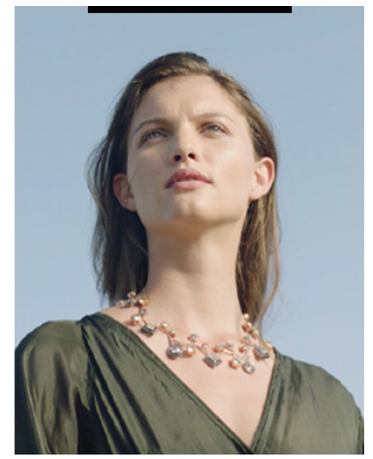
Telephone: +44 20 7734 5612

Website: cricket.co.uk

CREDIT: HUGH JOHNSON

CREDIT: HUGH JOHNSON





FISH WINGS & TINGS

It's known for its jerk chicken, but Granville Arcade's Fish Wings & Tings also has a few things on its Caribbean menu (papaya and mango mangos) might just convince you to side-step the poultry, and Trini chef Brian Danclair is often on hand to make suggestions. He takes inspiration from family recipes (Nanny Suzy's chilli sauce will blast the cobwebs away).

Address: Fish Wings & Tings, Brixton, London SW9 8JL

Telephone: +44 7411 642264

Website: fishwingsandtings.com

NEGRIL

Owner Latanya Christie takes a no-nonsense approach to the food at Negril: 'If I don't like it, it doesn't go on the menu.' Her game-changing Caribbean-with-a-conscience food is free-range and organic wherever possible, from the Calypso chicken sandwich to the BBQ ribs. But Negril also has an impressive veggie-and vegan-friendly menu: pumpkin curry, a homemade bean burger, Ital stew. An important part of Rastafarian culture, 'Ital' derives from the word 'vital', and emphasises natural, unprocessed ingredients such as plantain, avocado and chickpeas. Having created a friendly space for Brixton's melting pot of people to hang out, the presence of Ital foods on Christie's menu underscores her inclusive approach and Jamaican background.

Address: Negril, 132 Brixton Hill, London SW2 1RS

Telephone: +44 20 8674 8798

Website: negrilonline.co.uk

CREDIT: LESLEY LAU





GREMIO DE BRIXTON

By day, St Matthew's Church welcomes its congregations in Holy Communion. By night, the Grade II-listed building lights up from the vaults underground, and people pull up a pew for the best tapas in town. The menu is concise and consistent in its flavour, with creamy blue-cheese croquettes, fluffy [Spanish](#) tortillas and salty padrón peppers. I once took a date here who paid more attention to the red-wine chorizo than he did to me. Head there in the early evening for an atmospheric supper – the candlelit crypt is warm and quiet enough to maintain a conversation – or go later for espresso Martinis, when the dancefloor fills up and a saxophonist accompanies the DJ.

Address: Gremio de Brixton, Effra Road, Brixton, London SW2

1JF

Telephone: +44 20 7924 0660

Website: gremiodebrixton.com



BRIXTON OUTDOOR MARKET

Community spirit is at the heart of Brixton's outdoor market. The outdoor market sees tarpaulins and trucks selling everything from fresh fruit, home-baked bread and jars of locally produced condiments to Jamaican rum, traditional African beadwork and hand-painted homewares. There's a constant flow of people [shopping](#), tasting, haggling and simply saying hello, and the market stretches from Electric Avenue, up Pope's Road and into Brixton Station Road, where the old arches await renovation. These roads meander between Market

Row and Brixton Village, the indoor market sections, where you can find the butchers and fishmongers alongside some of the area's best dining spaces. This is where [Franco Manca](#) started out (and is still going strong), [Mamalan](#) put dumplings back on London's menu and Kao Sarn's BYOB policy made it a Friday-night favourite.

The market is particularly buzzy at weekends, so head here for a genuine masala dosa – the crispy-edged, soft-centred type you find on the streets of South India – and vast expanses of paella. Ask for a scoop of *socarrat* (the slow-cooked rice crust formed at the bottom of the giant pans) or fill a tub of comforting pad thai to take home.

Address: Brixton Station Road Market, Brixton Station Road,
London SW9 8PD

Website: brixtonmarket.net

CREDIT: LESLEY LAU



POP BRIXTON

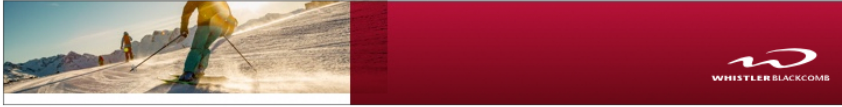
This is where [Cricket](#) originated, and there are some equally promising places to try amongst the pile of shipping containers at the end of Brixton Station Road. In the evenings, the volume – of noise, and of people – increases as the cocktails flow, so get in line for tender chicken at [Mama's Jerk](#), Sicilian plates at [Franzina Trattoria](#) and guilty pleasures at [Love Churros](#).

Pop also runs initiatives like The People's Fridge, where local bakeries, supermarkets, [restaurants](#) and residents can leave unwanted or leftover edible food – and absolutely anyone can take it, for free. The idea is to reduce food waste and redistribute unwanted items that could also help feed the hungry and homeless. Nearby is the community garden, Pop Farm, which grows herbs and veg for Pop's foodie community and teaches local students the value of fresh ingredients and mindful eating.

Address: Pop Brixton, 40 Brixton Station Road, Brixton.

London SW9 8PQ
Telephone: +44 20 3879 8410
Website: popbrixton.org

CREDIT: LESLEY LAU



THE BEST PUBS IN BRIXTON

Brixton's neighbouring Clapham and Battersea are better known for their pubs, but Brixton's are grittier and all the greater for it. The Prince Albert on Coldharbour Lane does a cheap pint (by London standards) and is the sort of place punters bring a speaker on a Saturday night and pour Jamaican ska into the smoking area. The Trinity Arms, tucked into a pretty square off Acre Lane, is the place to head on the morning after a heavy night (or before one) for hefty roasts and great curly fries.


The Landor and the Duke of Edinburgh are both on Brixton's fringes, but have superb outdoor areas hidden away – The Landor's is strung with fairy lights and is less rowdy than the D of E's huge garden, where a pint comes with a party atmosphere. The Effra Hall Tavern, though, is the best place to be on a Thursday night, where you can experience uplifting live jazz from a resident band that has been playing in the area for years. It's not only seriously fun, but the impromptu vocals and the skilled musicians are completely mesmerising. For happy hour, head to Market House for cocktails made by slick bartenders with ponytails.

Address: The Prince Albert, 418 Coldharbour Lane, Brixton,
London SW9 8LF
Telephone: +44 20 7274 3771
Website: greeneking-pubs.co.uk

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Telephone: +44 20 7274 4544
Website: trinityarms.co.uk

Address: The Landor, 70 Landor Road, London SW9 9PH
Telephone: +44 20 7737 3419
Website: thelandorpub.com

Address: Duke of Edinburgh, 204 Ferndale Road, Brixton, London SW9 8AG
Telephone: +44 20 7326 0301
Website: dukeofedinburghpub.com

Address: Market House, 443 Coldharbour Lane, Brixton, London SW9 8LN
Telephone: +44 20 7095 9443
Website: market-house.co.uk

THE BEST BARS IN BRIXTON

CREDIT: LESLEY LAU



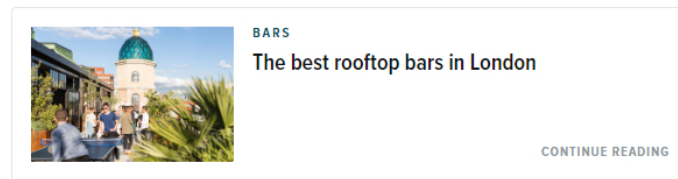
UPSTAIRS

Recently refurbished by architect firm Squire & Partners, members-

only rooftop bar [Upstairs](#) is located at the top of an Edwardian building that had been effectively abandoned until a few years ago. By day, it's the architects' headquarters, with a staff canteen and outdoor games area, but by night, the sixth floor fills out with young entrepreneurs and PR types unwinding with a game of ping pong or a craft beer.

Address: Upstairs, 248 Ferndale Road, Brixton, London SW9 8FR
Telephone: +44 20 3598 6970
Website: upstairsbrixton.com

Find more of the best [rooftop bars in London](#)



CREDIT: LESLEY LAU



THE SHRUB & SHUTTER

A Brixtonite's go-to for dates, the cocktails alone serve as a weird and wonderful conversation starter. Curious (if not outright crazy) ingredients like ants, star-anise smoke and leek oil might make you instinctively grimace, but the inspiration comes from the market itself where Caribbean, [African](#) and Latin influences live side by side. The team behind S&S are constantly experimenting and are a lively bunch to get into a who-can-come-up-with-the-wackiest-cocktail-ingredient competition, as long as you're not a sore loser.

Address: The Shrub and Shutter, 336 Coldharbour Ln, Brixton, London SW9 8QH