



London Calling

Eating and drinking is her favourite past time, so this month we thought it only fitting that Sarah Blinco (along with one of her foodie blogging mates, Kristie Welsh) reflect and share some delights of Olympic host city, London.

Every year of the world will be on London this month as the highly anticipated Games of the XXX Olympiad officially commence. Around 200 nations from around the globe will be competing in over 300 sporting events throughout the competition; and while the athletes compete, travellers and revellers will be doing what they always do best in the UK - eating, drinking - indulging. For a long while the region has dealt with a negative reputation when it comes to food, but culinary connoisseurs have been rethinking their stance on British cuisine recently, and I'd have to agree that it's actually really easy to find delicious fare - and it won't even break the bank! If you have ever been to London I'm sure you have a favourite find, whether it be a curry house in the back alleys of Brick Lane, a restaurant discovered while shopping up a storm at Westfield Shepherd's Bush, or a little family owned Italian joint stumbled across near a Tube station somewhere. It

would be impossible for me to name all of our favourites, but as a nod to the Olympics and our special food issue, I've compiled a few of the coolest precincts worth a visit if you're lucky enough to be heading to this fascinating city in the future.

Borough Market

Tube and Train: London Bridge

Whatever food you fancy, you'll find it here. Taste test, wine taste, indulge in a sugar buzz or a week's worth of baked delights - it's easy to graze all day! Borough is busy but there is still a whimsical 'old world' feel here - possibly due to the fact that it's nestled in a very historical part of London. Meander around Borough Market and you'll wander over cobbled streets, past delightful old churches, down narrow laneways and within just minutes you'll be walking by the Thames. Borough Market is as much about food as it is

the 'London experience', and as you explore the food stalls, listening to the local Londoner accents calling over each other for sales, it does feel like some things haven't changed since the market's inception hundreds of years ago.

Broadway Market

Tube stops: Haggerston or Hoxton,
Train: London Fields

If you want to live like a local, away from the craziness of one of the other larger (although fabulous) markets like Camden, Borough or Portobello Road, add the gorgeous Broadway Market to your Saturday itinerary. Situated in a lovely local neighbourhood in east London, between London Fields (park) and pretty canals, Broadway is brimming with the 'cool set' each Saturday. Fresh fare ranges from cheeses, pies, desserts, meat, fish, curries, vegetarian options and confectionary. The

atmosphere is what is really great here too. On a sunny day it's easy to spend hours wandering the street market, followed by more hours eating and drinking under the huge old trees of the park or watching the tide carry small crafts along the surrounding waterways. It's uniquely London, and if you're there early enough try the breakfast at Turkish-inspired Ephesus Restaurant - delicious!

Shoreditch

Tube stops: Old Street, Barbican or Moorgate

Kristie Welsh is a popular personality from our south-east corner, and she was also recently chosen as the coveted The Good Guy's Home Chef Blogger. She fills us in on the uber-trendy Shoreditch neighbourhood. "Winning a Jamie Oliver inspired trip to London as part of The Good Guys Home Chef Blogger competition was a foodie's dream come true! Not only did I have the gastronomical pleasure of visiting four of his restaurants - the retro-style Union Jacks, Fifteen, Jamie's Italian and the stunning Barbecoa (which he co-owns with American chef Adam Perry Lang) - but I also had the pleasure of touring his headquarters. Jamie Oliver HQ is home to over 200 staff and is situated in the Shoreditch / Hoxton area - an increasingly popular and trendy part of London. His offices are not open to the public (so you will just have to read my blog to find out what goes on there - homechefblogger.thegoodguys.com.au/blog/the-good-guys-home-chef-bloggers-jamie-oliver-inspired-

foodie-trip-of-a-lifetime-to-london/), but you can pose for a photo by the front door and pop around the corner to Fifteen for a delicious meal. Fifteen is well known for its apprenticeship program, set up by Jamie to help the unemployed youth of London to find a better future in the food industry, but there is nothing amateur about it. Stylish, modern decor, impressive wine and cocktail lists and professional, friendly wait staff set the scene. The food is, of course, top notch. If you're looking for something more low key though, around the corner from Jamie's Fifteen is Whitecross Street Market - an open air, smaller version of the very popular Borough Markets. Open Monday - Friday from 11am - 4pm, it's street food heaven and cheap! Fresh, tasty food from every corner of the world beckons. There are around 30-40 stalls serving up Thai and Indian curries, pasta, spit roasts, vegetarian fare, Turkish pizza, 'manwiches'... and then there's my favourite - Luardos burrito van. There are also plenty of delicious desserts on offer so be sure to pick yourself up a sweet treat afterwards."

Camden

Tube stops: Camden Town or Chalk Farm
Road, Train: Camden Road

Camden is London's crazy, cool, alternative hub. To tourists, it is well known for markets which occupy a vast space every weekend. Similarly, in and around the markets you'll discover trendy (or some not so) local pubs

and cafes where you'll often spot a celebrity hanging out and looking cool (or not so, as the case may be). All good for a bite to eat and a fab photo opp.

Covent Garden

Tube: Covent Garden, Leicester Square, Embankment, Piccadilly Circus

There is so much to see, do and love in London... I should have devised a 'top 20' list instead. Still, this is a simple, central option because you can easily shop, explore the key tourist meccas and eat! Everything is close by and the choice is almost overwhelming. One gem in particular is Gordon's Wine Bar (www.gordonswinebar.com). Located just near Embankment tube, head down some steep narrow stairs to a cosy space lit by candles. It's almost 'tunnel' like - probably not for the claustrophobic - but definitely for those who tend towards old and interesting. The walls are lined with historical newspaper clippings and evidently Gordon's is the oldest wine bar in London (est. 1890) - well worth a stop for a meal and a glass of wine.

Got a favourite international foodie experience? Share it with us on Facebook, look us up, www.facebook.com/Get.it.mag

