

EAT&DRINK

WHERE WILL YOU GO ONCE THE RESTRICTIONS END? **LAURA MILLAR** ROUNDS UP THE BEST NEW OPENINGS



Fits the bill: A duck confit at Mo Diner

Akoko, Fitzrovia

William JM Chilila, a former MasterChef: The Professionals finalist, has opened this intimate restaurant on Berners Street dedicated to West African cuisine. Devised around an intricately flavoured tasting menu, it features classics such as smoked jollof rice and goat (right) and miyan taushe, a delicious Nigerian pumpkin soup. **£59pp; wine pairing £55pp. akoko.co.uk**



The Black Book, Soho

This atmospheric underground wine bar, run by sommeliers and co-owners Gearoid Devaney and Xavier Rousset, includes an ever-changing list of interesting wines, many available by the glass via Coravin (from just £4.50). A range of dishes soak it all up, from cheese and charcuterie plates (£15) to roasted oniglet (£17) and pan-fried sea bream (£17). **blackbooksoho.co.uk**



MO DINER, MAYFAIR

What's it all about? Irrepressible restaurateur Mourad 'Mo' Mazouz has converted the café next to his long-standing high-end Moroccan joint, Momo, into a diner that aims to mix the Med with LA.

'I got the idea after reading an article in The New York Times six years ago about traditional US diner culture dying out,' he says.

Think 1930s-style cantina with cosy booths opposite a long open bar and kitchen counter, like a railway carriage. He's enlisted Michelin-starred chef Eric Chavot, who's worked at Mo's restaurant Sketch, to oversee the very affordable menu.

The vibe: From the sunny yellow neon entrance, to the pastel chairs and tables outside, the palm-tree-covered, lightbox-style ceiling, retro placemats, menus and photos on the walls, it's all



about fun. 'I did most of the design myself and I love surprising people,' says Mo. 'One of my favourite details is the scratch cards all guests get at the end - you get the chance to win your dinner for free!'

The food: There are influences from all around the Med, including North Africa, as well as Greece, Lebanon and France. You'll find anything from an intense bouillabaisse (£9, pictured left) to tasty lamb kofta kebabs (£6.50), grilled octopus (£9) and sandwiches riffing on the likes of tuna nicoise (£6.50). Don't miss the warm chocolate cookie dough (£5), which comes freshly baked in a cast-iron pan.

modiner.london

Panttechnicon, Belgravia

Located in the grand surrounds of a former department store, this vast structure comprises a hip coffee shop owned by Japanese brand Maison Kitsune and a retail outlet, while a Japanese restaurant is planned for winter. Already here, however, is chic Nordic eatery Eldr, which combines precise, delicate flavours and ingredients such as scallops with leek, mussel sauce and reindeer (£16.50) and trout salad with apple and fennel (£14). Take a seat in the leafy, airy roof garden. **panttechnicon.com**



About 8, Birmingham

Great British Menu chef Andrew Sheridan delivers the concept of 'his whole career in eight courses' to Centenary Square. The unusual menu is centred on that magic number so you'll find dishes called things such as '8-10-2006' (the date he became a chef, this one's a take on a carrot cake), 'Resurrection' (number 8 in the Bible and the first dish he made at college: roast venison) and his apple and scallop 'eight days a week', which is a nod to his Liverpool roots.

£88pp, drinks pairing £64pp, about8.co.uk



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