

# Gourmet gems

SUDI PIGOTT reveals what's on the menu this August



## COOL ICE CREAM

New Battersea-based ice cream company Rock Hopper Ice are punctilious about their ingredients, using the best coffee beans and Sicilian lemon in their small batch ice creams, which taste sensational. Arguably as good as homemade, which just about justifies their price.

**Buy at The Butcher Bar & Grill, 39-49 Parkgate Road, Battersea SW11 4NP**  
020 7924 3999  
[www.thebutcherandgrill.com](http://www.thebutcherandgrill.com)

## TOMATO-TASTIC

August should see a glut of tomatoes, the perfect excuse for making gazpacho, which I

adore. Make it even more refreshing by blending in some de-seeded and chopped watermelon flesh, besides skinned and de-seeded tomatoes, a whole peeled cucumber, a red pepper, a shallot and clove of garlic, a few sloshes of olive oil, sherry wine vinegar and a touch of cayenne pepper.

## BREAD AND BUTTER

A fantastic addition to Northcote Road is Gail's Bakery and café. Breads are excellent with no preservatives, no chemicals or additives but are baked not on the premises but at their central bakery. Favourites are Pain de Mie, a French version of Jewish cholla – a sweet dough enhanced with milk and butter, and potato and rosemary bread, and hazelnut and raisin sourdough.

**64 Northcote Road, Battersea SW11 6QL**  
[www.gailsbread.co.uk](http://www.gailsbread.co.uk)



## AQUUM

An undeniably glamorous bar with lots of white leather and high counter stools and extraordinary lighting and a late, late weekend licence, Aquum is trying to offer a decent food menu, too. Best are the Oriental bar snacks – including impressively light and delicately spiced prawn wontons and “Thai” d sour calamari. Avoid the somewhat solid salt cod croquettes. A great lure, too, is the £5 lunch – generous portions of well thought-out dishes: smoked salmon and pea fishcakes had plenty of potato to bulk them, but were fresh-tasting and delicious. Similarly pesto grilled chicken salad. Desserts stick to classics: a decent sticky toffee pudding and tasty brownie. All in all good value with a pleasing buzz – and the cocktails are exceptional.

**68-70 Clapham High street, Clapham, SW4 7UL; 020 7627 2776; [www.aquum.co.uk](http://www.aquum.co.uk)**



## In Season



### GLOBE ARTICHOKE

Globe artichokes are in abundance and demand a mustardy vinaigrette. Better still are the small chokes that are irresistible fried whole and crisp in Jewish Roman-style.

### GROUSE

After the Glorious Twelfth, make grouse a treat. Look out for birds that are plump, with unblemished, fresh-looking deep red skin – avoid any that seem dry, or smell ‘off’. The younger the bird, the better the flesh – sharp claws indicate a grouse that isn't too mature. Roast with bacon or parma ham on the breast and serve with posh crisps.

### SQUID

Squid are very definitely at their prime, delicious pan-fried with plenty of chilli and lime or on the BBQ. Try, too, lesser known witch or Torbay sole, one of more sustainable species Moxons fishmongers are keen to get onto our culinary repertoire: it looks rather like Dover sole and tastes rather like lemon sole but needs more seasoning. Pan-fry and serve with a fresh mayo with anchovies and capers or bake in the oven in vegetable stock and serve with a spinach and cream sauce.

