

Cakes & Bubbles

★★★★☆

→ 70 Regent St, W1B 4DY. ↻ Piccadilly Circus.

WITH A MENU by patisserie grandioso Albert Adria (considered by some to be the best pastry chef in the world), this small space at the Hotel Café Royale is a destination for pastry buffs.

Surroundings are old-school swish; lots of marble, gold-leaf walls and drinks trolleys of fizz. The windows face busy Regent Street; you can gawp at passers-by. They can gawp back.

The 'cake' concoctions are radical. A twist on a pancake was airy, filled with a yogurt foam and topped with a crème brûlée shell; a minuscule stroopwafel ice-cream sandwich came served in an elaborate box and then popped in a dainty foil bag to keep cool. Sometimes it went too far: the 'carrot cake' was just a few grated tendrils of the vegetable wedged between paper-thin wafers.

Get the signature chocolate cork instead: it's the most decadent, rich – and weighty – thing here.

But there's no sugar-coating the prices. A single creation costs between £6 and £12, and to feel even remotely satisfied, you'll need several. They're so dainty that they can seem lost on the plate, but also so light (some just a few grams) that at least there's no guilt. Oh, and everything is also low-sugar and colourant-free.

In short, don't go chasing a fat sugar rush. This is a place for patisserie pilgrims. ■ Nina Clark
Cakes for two with drinks and service: **around £60.**

WHAT IS IT...

A luxurious hotel patisserie from a world-renowned pastry chef.

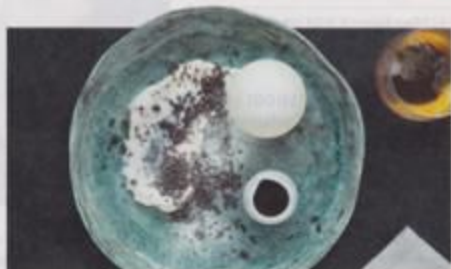
WHY GO...

To see what all the Albert Adria fuss is about.



THREE OF THE BEST

Hammersmith restaurants



The Gate ★★★

→ 53 Queen Caroline St, W6 9QL. ↻ Hammersmith.

WHAT IS IT... The original branch of the iconic vegetarian restaurant, once popular with the likes of Macca and Madge.

WHY GO... For classic dishes that are beautifully presented and nicely done: like the beetroot veggie burger in a pretzel bun.



The River Café★★★★

→ Thames Wharf, Rainville Rd, W6 9HA. ↻ Hammersmith.

WHAT IS IT... A celebrated Italian restaurant by the edge of the Thames towpath, where Jamie Oliver and other celeb chefs trained.

WHY GO... To eat flawless, unfussy grills and plates of exceptional pasta (in summer, ask for a table on the terrace).



Zia Lucia★★★★

→ 61 Blythe Rd, W3 4 DP. ↻ Kensington Olympia Overground.

WHAT IS IT... A neighbourhood pizzeria where the USP is a choice of four different 48-hour fermented doughs.

WHY GO... For the spectacular nutty wholemeal base topped with anything: it's better than the real thing.

EXCLUSIVE

THE GATE



Save 40 percent on a mouth-watering plant-based meal at this popular veggie hotspot. Three courses and a glass of prosecco is just £24 – and you can redeem at either Marylebone or Hammersmith branches.

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