

## WHERE TO DRINK



TIM BADHAM

IF THE Notting Hill Carnival isn't your cup of tea, there are plenty of interesting venues across London at which to drink away the bank holiday. In Fitzrovia, for instance, the perennially popular Sanderson is keeping its courtyard terrace fresh with an especially a la mode pop-up. Named Sanderson Green, it's serving laid-back, haute fast food American-style. It has put together a new cocktail menu including a selection of tipsy shakes, which distil the punch of a booze-lashed milkshake into a more polished beverage, complete with popping candy garnish.

In King's Cross, mixology wizard Tony Conigliaro has collaborated with Bruno Loubet to create the cocktails at the chef's newest venture, Grain Store. The exploded kitchen concept instils a New York buzz, and you can't miss Loubet himself running the kitchen. Alongside traditional cocktails like Grain Store's truffle martini, the bar also offers an array of refreshing Greco-Roman inspired spiced wines, which are available by the glass or the jug and are perfectly suited for warm weather.

Anyone who's visited Seoul will know that Koreans are talented partiers: it makes sense, then, that Jubo has opened within the Bedroom Bar in Shoreditch. Revellers will now have the opportunity to down ice cold bottles of Hite beer whilst indulging in some of the finest fried chicken in the capital – it's a revelation. The owners have created an array of house-infused shochus, with flavours including ginger, raspberry and blackberry, and chilli kimchi. The edgy, neon-lit room nods to its locale and lends itself to boisterous evenings.



The Grain Store at King's Cross

If you prefer to drink in the Nipponese fashion, Shoryu Soho on Denman Street is the newest ramen concept rolled out by the Japan Centre, and they serve a mean tonkotsu.

However, perhaps more notably for Japanophiles, the ground-floor bar at Shoryu offers Europe's largest selection of sake, with over 120 bottles on the menu and tasting flights available, which are a killer introduction to a trending tipple.

Nearby in buzzing Kingly Court, Whyte and Brown, a restaurant that serves almost every permutation of chicken and egg, has launched with an industrial chic ground floor bar. Cocktails come compliments of master mixologist Ryan Chettywardana, and the design is surprisingly airy and progressive, amalgamating floor-to-ceiling windows, pendant lighting, reclaimed timber flooring and distressed cabinets into a very hip space.

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## Sun, sea and history in Sardinia

THE SMALL town of Santa Teresa di Gallura on the northern tip of Sardinia held significant strategic importance for various Italian and Sardinian rulers over the ages.

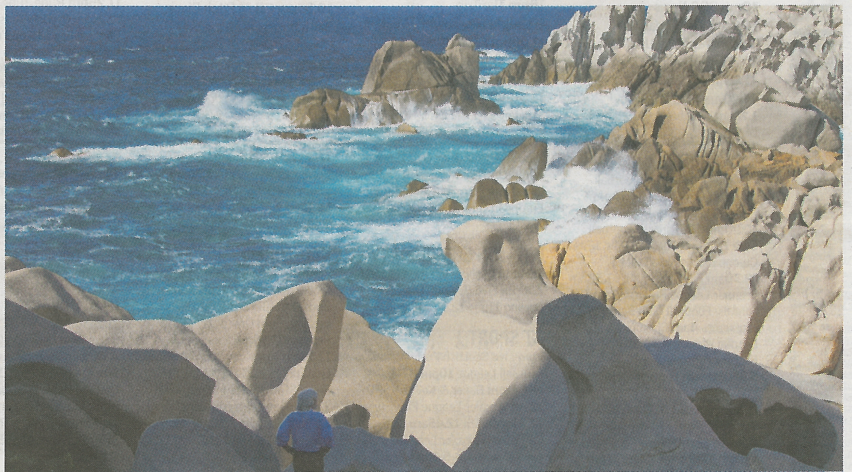
Traces of its history can still be spotted in the surrounding towns and villages, although today the economy is supported almost entirely by tourism. Santa Teresa's population explodes from around 5,000 in the off-season to between 10,000 and 15,000 in the summer.

Northern Sardinia reeks of foreign wealth – from the private jets and helicopters scattered across Olbia airport's runway on our arrival, to the town of Porto Cervo, home of boutique designer shops and villas, yachts and superyachts belonging to politicians, footballers and film-stars, where the apartments cost €16,000 per square metre and a humble gelato will set you back a cool €26.

Venture out a little into the classically Mediterranean countryside, though, and the environment becomes more laid back. The fertile soil is home to various species of cacti, flora and aromatic herbs, as well as the famous white Vermentino di Gallura grape used to make the island's only DOCG (Denominazione di Origine Controllata e Garantita) accredited wine. The pace of life is slow, although drivers on the winding roads will think nothing of cutting across lanes on blind corners, almost colliding with the coach taking me to and from the hotel.

Our destination, the Valle Dell'Erica hotel, is as hospitable as you'd expect from a region so dependent on tourism. Its main appeal is its panoramic setting, and it's cleverly designed so that almost every room has a view of the ocean.

Exploring these turquoise waters by boat is a must. I'm told you can charter your own vessel from various suppliers, but I opted for a guided excursion around the archipelago. My ludicrously attractive guide Antonello points out the islands around us – Razzoli, Spargi, Maddalena, Santa Maria, Budelli – as well as a weather-worn granite rock shaped like a witch's head (it is a curious quirk of the area; various guides over a five day period pointed out rocks shaped like an elephant, a bear, a dog, another witch's head and, my favourite, a humpbacked priest). When I reached the shores of a secluded white sandy beach, I stripped down and took a dip in



The interesting rock formations around the coast of Sardinia

WORDS BY CHRIS HARLOW

the cold, clear water.

Whether it was a stop at one of the touristy cafes for an espresso and amaretti, or a formal sit down meal accompanied by fine wines, the food was uniformly excellent. On my first night, I was treated to a six course meal consisting of traditional recipes with an experimental twist, but Sardinian food is actually much better when it goes back to basics. Traditionally, the island was inhabited primarily by shepherds, and the cuisine today reflects this. At

the Valle Dell'Erica buffet, everything is prepared in front of you in a glass-fronted kitchen, with staff waiting to serve – be it to cut a few slices of roast suckling pig from the spit, serve up locally sourced fish, or prepare fresh pasta with meat, vegetables or seafood. The Sardinians have a ferocious sweet tooth, and sugary deserts, fruit juices and biscuits are in abundance, while croissants at breakfast are served glazed and covered with sugar sprinkles or hundreds and thousands.

At each meal, bread and cheese is never too far away, and it has its own regional flair. On every table is pane carasau, a crispy flatbread with a texture similar to that of a poppadum, originally designed to keep shepherds nourished during long stays away from home, and can be served plain or brushed with olive oil and sprinkled with salt. Also widely available is Sardinia's own pecorino sardo, a hard cheese made from sheep's milk, whose protected designation of origin status means it sells for over £20 a kilogram in the UK.

Evenings consisted of live music and dancing, fuelled by more wine, limoncello, and the heavy, sweet, and distinctively purple Mirto liquor. Latin American dance styles are popular among the locals, and I was given a quick tutorial in the basics of salsa, rumba and meringue before being set loose on the dancefloor. My feisty Sardinian dance partner tells me I have "natural rhythm", which filled me with so much confidence that I forgot all of the steps and immediately trod on her toe. All was forgiven though, and I decided to retire on a relative high, heading back to the room for one last look at that view before bed.

## WHERE TO STAY

The resort Valle Dell'Erica is priced starting at €140 per person per day for a standard room off-season, rising to €680 for a presidential room between 10 and 16 August (half board, drinks not included). The hotel has a nursery and junior club catering for children aged 12 and below, and is perhaps best suited for young families. Couples might consider

instead the smaller, quieter and more intimate Capo D'Orso, with day rates ranging from €150 to €760 per person.

## WHERE TO GO

The Vigne Surrau winery in Porto Cervo hosts guided visits and wine tasting. Try award winning names like Branu Vermentino and Sincaru Cannonau, and find out where it's made and how it's aged. The windy Porto Pollo beach is

well-suited for watersports, while sun-chasers could visit Rena Bianca, sheltered from the wind on both sides and characterised by fine sand and clear blue-green water. History buffs might consider the Ethnographic Museum in Agglus, where you can learn about the ancient traditions and way of life of the people in the region, with clothes, tools and furniture out in the open to touch and feel.

## Travel review: The Four Season's Hotel George V in Paris

I HAVE a confession to make. I don't like Paris and I don't find Paris romantic. On the contrary I find it dirty, crowded and unsympathetic in every way. But I have family in Paris, so I often find myself there.

On this particular occasion, it was my father's 70th birthday. He'd summoned three generations for a formal dinner on the Left Bank, and to add to the lack of romance, my hubby and I would have our six-month-old baby in tow.

Thank goodness, then, for the Four Seasons Hotel Georges V, which turned out to be a surprisingly family-friendly hotel.

Stressed and hungry after a horrendous early start followed by two hours of a screaming baby on the Eurostar, the porters whisked us out of travel hell straight into a cool, marbled, womblike lobby.

After being shown our quarters, an uncharacteristic pang of optimism shot through me. Perhaps this Paris should be different. Perhaps it would be romantic after all.

We'd been assigned a room on the fourth floor with a wraparound terrace boasting views of the Eiffel Tower. Further buoyed by a demi bottle of desert wine left on a silver platter as a welcome, as well as some thoughtful gifts for the baby: a box of animal-shaped Bulgari soaps, a fluffy mini bathrobe, a cot-bed all made up, a basket of assorted creams and nappies, a jungle gym... There was even a tissue-paper-stuffed gift box with a handwritten card. We'd found family hotel heaven on the Champs Elysées – things were definitely looking up.

Time got away from us and before we knew it, our impossibly chic babysitter

was eyeing our tightly swaddled bundle suspiciously. They don't wrap their babies up like burritos in France apparently. We were suited and booted and ready for aperitifs. La Gallerie is a gloriously old-fashioned long bar on the ground floor of the Georges Cinq – and



A room with a view, of the Eiffel Tower

one of my father's favourite drinking holes. Lined with plush sofas and splendiferous flower arrangements, it overlooks a pretty courtyard, which, at the time of our visit, was strung with deep-purple orchids. My father looked perfectly at home in the corner wearing a green velvet suit and sipping a Negroni.

As our little family gathering grew and the sun went down, we had to prise ourselves away from the softly-lit, comfortable climes of the Georges V (I know better than to aggravate a Parisian Maitre 'd). As we stood to leave, supermodel Claudia Schiffer strode in and headed for the courtyard. She paused at the French doors, looked over one shoulder and delivered a megawatt smile to my father.

Now who can ask for a better birthday present than that?  
By Leo Bear [fourseasons.com/paris](http://fourseasons.com/paris)