



The Lunchquest 2012 Edinburgh Guide

by
BKR and MJ



Dear Fellow Lunchers,

Lunchquest started in July 2011, as a simple way of ensuring that two great friends ate in a wide variety of restaurants, rather than spending their entire lives in the same place.

A year on, we've reviewed over 200 restaurants, cafés, bars, takeaways, and other assorted eating places, and we've had a great deal of fun doing it.

But we've barely scratched the surface of Edinburgh's dining delights. For local residents, we'll have missed one of your favourite places; there's no doubt about it. In some cases, we've simply not been able to visit it yet; in others, we haven't enjoyed it quite as much as you do.

We've tried to categorise this by different styles, but we haven't been totally successful. We don't have a section for best French restaurant, which seems a little strange. This can be explained by two factors: one, we don't go to lots of French places, as one of us doesn't particularly care for their overly fussy approach; and two, there is a completely established genre of Scottish-French fine dining, often referred to as "Auld Alliance" through which French techniques are allied with locally-sourced Scottish produce. This style is more than adequately represented in our fine dining category.

Edinburgh is a fantastic city. You're never far away from a wonderful new dining experience. During August, the culinary diversity that we're used to the whole year round is matched by the range of visitors we host, and the breadth of culture to which we give a showcase.

As with everywhere, we have our strengths and weaknesses. I still don't think we're blessed with a truly great Chinese restaurant. Likewise, despite some recent efforts to address this, I don't think we have a steak restaurant that matches the supreme quality of our Scottish beef.

What we do have is seafood in abundance, delivered in a range of innovative styles. We have excellent beef, lamb, pork and poultry, spectacular game, delicious fruit and vegetables, and everything else to pack a bountiful larder. We are truly blessed to have these resources at our disposal.

What we present in this short guide is a brief and personal insight into some of the places that are best equipped to capitalise upon this wonderful wild harvest, adapt it to the culinary style of their forebears, and present you with high quality dishes to make your time in Edinburgh, whether permanent or fleeting, an altogether enjoyable experience.

What's more, if you don't like what you get one night, you only have another six hundred plus places to choose from the next time you're hungry. We wish you good lunching and dining luck!

MJ & BKR

THE BEST OF THE BUNCH

BEST FOR ITALIAN

Café Domenico's
Piatto Verde
Al Dente
Italian Kitchen
Locanda de Gusti

BEST FOR STYLE

Divino Enoteca
Cucina at Hotel Missoni
Plumed Horse
The Honours
Hadrian's

BEST FOR INDIAN

Mithas
Punjab'n de Rasoi
Spice Pavilion
Mumbai Mansion
Mosque Kitchen

BEST FOR FINE DINING

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The Mulroy
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Purslane

BEST FOR VALUE LUNCHTIME SIT-IN

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Turkish Kitchen

BEST FOR LUNCHTIME TAKEAWAY

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Lime
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Chequers

BEST FOR SEAFOOD

Ship on the Shore
Iris
Ondine
Café Fish
Café Royal

BEST FOR PUB GRUB

King's Wark
Bon Vivant
Blue Moon Café
Milne's
Ecco Vino

BEST FOR PAN-ASIAN

Kanpai
Koyama
Kim's Mini Meals
Time 4 Thai
Phuket Pavilion

BEST FOR SOUP

Elephant Juice
Union of Genius
New Town Deli
Edinburgh Larder
Whiski Rooms

BEST CAFÉ

Hula Juice Bar
Peter's yard
I <3 Café
Loudon's
Bon Papillon

BEST FOR SUNDAY LUNCHTIME

Pink Olive
Nom de Plume
The Antiquary
The Bonham
Porto & Fi

Best for *Italian Food*

CAFÉ DOMENICO'S

Domenico's is a family run Italian, in Leith, with capacity for around twenty people. It offers amazing take out lunches from their deli counter, with their rolls, wraps, pastas and salads the best in the whole city, to our mind. For those sitting in, they can choose from a lunch menu and specials board, at lunchtime, with a full a la carte on offer in the evenings.

What's more, they are so accommodating. A few weeks ago we asked for something off-menu – a certain combination of flavours with a tomato-based, instead of creamy, sauce; and they told us that they would be happy to make it, and even suggested different concoctions they could make for us that might taste even better.

The place is a wee gem, so is our number one recommendation for Italian food in Edinburgh.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: pea and parma ham soup; tuna, olives, capers and tomato pasta; creamy bacon and mushroom pasta.

We drank: sparkling water (big bottle), espresso (2)

This cost: c.£20 (two diners)

We scored it: 33/40

30 Sandport Street
EH6 6EP



PIATTO VERDE



Piatto Verde is a lovely wee place, in a slightly out of the way part of town.

Making a special trip to visit is

entirely worth it though, as you will be rewarded with flavour-packed dishes and fantastic service, at a very reasonable cost.

A place where you can rely on advice from the staff without a flicker of doubt, we'd strongly recommend this as a place to visit when you need a fix of Italian home-style cooking.

On our evening visit, we ate: mussels, melanzane alla parmigiana, siciliana pasta, risotto al forno

We drank: house red wine, water, espresso

Total bill: £43 (two diners)

We scored it: 33.5/40

7 Dundee Terrace
EH11 1DL



AL DENTE

Al Dente is a little family-style Italian place, that regular Edinburgh diners will remember fondly as Tinel-li's, which served traditional Italian fare on this site, for over twenty years. The place holds around twenty-five in its intimate surroundings.



Our lunchtime meal was packed full of flavour and class, with the soup and the orecchiette al ragu' d'agnello really standing out.

They keep things simple and let their flavours sing.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: cappelletti in broth, mixed bruschetta, orecchiette with lamb ragu, pumpkin ravioli with walnut sauce

We drank: sparkling water, espresso

Total bill: c.£35 (two diners)

We scored it: 30/40

139 Easter Road
EH7 5QA



ITALIAN KITCHEN

The Italian Kitchen is a smart place located in a Stockbridge basement. It's incredibly bright and airy, though.

On our visit, we were seated in the nice, purple-walled dining area and given menus that were comprehensive, without being over the top, like some Italian restaurants can try to be. There was a nice selection of starters, pastas, a few pizzas and a few desserts.



The melanzane is 'exactly the way the dish should be served to best show off the quality of the ingredients in the Mediterranean classic,' While the seafood linguine was filled with fresh seafood and just enough sauce to coat, not drown, every al dente bite.

Their neatly presented dishes showed some fresh and considered thinking.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: melanzane alla parmigiana, seafood linguine, four cheese and rocket ravioli

We drank: sparkling water, espresso

Total bill: c.£40 (two diners)

We scored it: 29.5/40

18-24 Deanhaugh Street
EH4 1LY

LOCANDA DE GUSTI

The restaurant is stylish and sleek.

Locanda de Gusti served us some impressive dishes that hit the mark with most of the diners, but the restaurant was remarkably empty, and the service reminiscent of that from the heart of Italy (I'll leave that to interpretation).



The linguine pescatora was good with enough seafood to make it worthwhile, while the baked dishes bubbled, but the dish of the day, the skate, was a real highlight. However, the cake they served at the end was a bit too sweet.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: lentil and bean soup, baked provola, spiedino di verdure grigliate servito con olio extra vergine d'oliva e fiori de zucca e dip al peperoncino, cured meat and mozzarella, linguine pescatora, skate wings, cake

We drank: Ikebana chilled Montepulciano d'Abruzzo

Total bill: c.£160 (eight diners)

We scored it: 28/40

7, 35 East London St
EH7 4BN



Best for *Style*

DIVINO ENOTECA

Divino Enoteca is an extremely stylish wine bar, not far from the bustle of the Grassmarket.

With an extraordinary wine list, the ideal way to soak in the leather and wood stylings is over a nice glass of your favourite, while nibbling on one of their lovely antipasto platters.

The welcoming and knowledgeable service from Lorenzo and the team is guaranteed to keep a smile on your face throughout. Booking advised (even for drinks).

On our evening visit, we ate: sourdough bread with submerged balsamic, bresaola carpaccio, melanzane alla parmigiana, sea bass, monkfish pasta, scamorza risotto

We drank: water, wine flights (a selection of wines in a set number of drinks from certain regions) (2), red wine

Total Bill: c.£150 (four diners)

We scored it: 28/40

5 Merchant Street
EH1 2QD



CUCINA AT HOTEL MISSONI

Cucina is a style palace, with the restaurant routinely attracting high praise as one of the best Italians in Scotland.



We weren't enthused by the food, but for a pure slice of design

heaven, it's hard to beat.

It also has a very smart cocktail bar in the hotel, which is one of Edinburgh's premier places to be seen.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: pasta in three onion sauce, fried risotto cakes, chicken, coley, mussels, brown shrimp salad.

We drank: sparkling water, still water, coffees, tea.

Total bill: £80 (four diners)

We scored it: 26/40

1 George IV Bridge
EH1 1AD



PLUMED HORSE

An integral part of Leith's magnificent array of dining options, the Plumed Horse offers an exceptional top-end dining experience.



With a relaxed and welcoming ambience, this former Michelin starred place consistently produces excellent quality dishes. The staff is knowledgeable and friendly and on the whole the Plumed Horse seems to be more effectively staffed than other fine-dining establishments we have visited.

Their Georgian dining space, with high ceilings and beautiful cornice work is a joy to behold.

The food was of a very high standard throughout, with only a highly over-seasoned risotto really letting things down.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: trio of amuse bouches, ham hock and black pudding terrine, smoked salmon with white crab meat tian, fillet of monkfish with herb and leek risotto, slow braised breast and roast fillet of veal, cheeseboard



We drank: prosecco, sparkling water, coffees

Total bill: c.£65 (two diners)

We scored it: 34.5/40

50-54 Henderson Street.
EH6 6DE

THE HONOURS

The brasserie offering from the stable of esteemed Michelin star chef, Martin Wishart, The Honours offers stylish dining in the heart of the New Town.

Service is slick and efficient, and although we weren't wowed by the dishes, the overall experience is one to relish.

With Charlotte Square, home of the Edinburgh International Book Festival, just around the corner, it's beautifully located.



Meals are served both in their main dining room and the bar area, so it caters well for a range of needs, from quick bite to luxuriant evening of indulgence.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: wild mushroom bouillon, caponata, poached sea bream, halibut with chorizo and lentils

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We drank: Sparkling water, espresso.

Total Bill: c.£60 (two diners)

We scored it: 32/40

58 North Castle Street
EH2 3LU



HADRIAN'S BRASSERIE



Michelin star chef, Jeff Bland.

The quality is very high, with exceptional service, in a classic dining space.

Hadrian's offers high value set menu options, both at lunchtime and in the evening, as well as full a la carte.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: roasted pumpkin soup, ox cheeks with horseradish mash

We drank: sparkly water, espresso

Total bill: c.£20 (one diner)

We scored it: 32/40

1 Princes Street
EH2 2EQ



The brasserie in Princes Street's Balmoral Hotel, the menu at Hadrian's is overseen by



Best for *Indian Food*

MITHAS

Simply the best restaurant in Edinburgh, at the moment, Mithas offers top-end Indian fine dining, with exceptional quality, presentation and imagination.



Their lunchtime tasting menu is spectacular,

both in terms of quality and value, with their fish dishes really shining through.

It's BYO for alcoholic drinks (no corkage charged).

We couldn't recommend it highly enough. If there's only one restaurant that you visit when you're in Edinburgh, make it Mithas.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: vegetarian light bite lunch, lunch platter, lunchtime tasting menu

We drank: sparkling water, coffees.

Total bill: c.£100 (four diners)

We scored it: 40/40

7 Dock Place
EH6 6LU



PUNJAB'N DE RASOI

A social enterprise supporting women and their families from the Sikh and minority ethnic communities, Punjab'n de Rasoi serves simple Indian staples to an excellent standard.



Set in calm and serene café surroundings, this is an Edinburgh treat that's not to be missed.



Their lunchtime thali offers a nice range of dishes, presented simply. The food is fresh, flavour-packed and deeply satisfying, so we'd recommend you go and sample it for yourselves.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: vegetable thali, fish thali

We drank: water

Total bill: £16 (two diners)

We scored it: 31.5/40

122-124 Leith Walk
EH6 5DT

SPICE PAVILION

Featuring one of the warmest welcomes in the city, the Spice Pavilion provides diners with high quality Indian dishes, in a stylish New Town basement location.



Their lunchtime deal, which offers three courses for £8.95, is excellent value. Dishes are beautifully prepared and smartly presented.

Edinburgh has a number of very good Indian restaurants. Spice Pavilion sits very comfortably within their number.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: chicken tikka, vegetable pakora, lamb passander, sag aloo, boiled rice, garlic naan

We drank: sparkling water

Total bill: £20 (two diners)

We scored it: 31/40

3A1 Dundas Street,
EH3 6QG



MUMBAI MANSION

Mumbai Mansion offers completely reliable Indian fare, in stylish surroundings.

Both courses we sampled were very good, and came highly recommended by the helpful and friendly staff.

Haymarket offers a broad range of restaurant styles, and Mumbai Mansion sit very nicely in this diverse district.

On our evening visit, we ate: prawn on puri, lamb rezala, basmati pilau rice

We drank: lager, tea



Total bill: c.£28 (one diner)

We scored it: 30/40

250 Morrison Street
EH3 8DT



MOSQUE KITCHEN

Fast becoming an Edinburgh institution, particularly at Festival time, the Mosque Kitchen provides quick and tasty Indian dishes, served on paper plates, for a very reasonable price.



A popular refueling stop for performers and audiences alike, its location between some of the major Fringe venues serves it very well.

The new restaurant, happily indoors, with a range of coffees and cakes, still provides simple and tasty Indian food with a choice of vegetarian dishes as well. A perfect place for quick, good Indian delights.



We ate: A range of curries and sun-dries

We drank: mineral water, espresso, black coffee

Total Bill: c.£40 (Curries – £5.50, Coffees – £1.50, Water – £1) (four diners)

We scored it: 26/40

West Nicholson Street
EH8 9BX



Best for *Fine Dining*

MARK GREENAWAY

Now of Great British Menu fame, Mark Greenaway continues to build a powerful reputation for exceptional quality and invention.

Dishes are presented to the highest standards, and his own brand of molecular gastronomy produces power-packed flavour and thought-provoking excellence.



The restaurant has a relaxed and welcoming vibe, with stuffiness firmly eschewed.

For a spectacular dining experience, this is the place to come.

On our evening visit, we ate: scallops, red mullet, parsnip veloute, lamb, hake, skate wings, pork belly, broken lemon tart, chocolate fondant, cheese board, parfait.

We drank: rose-wine, water

Total bill: £160 (four diners)

We scored it: 37.5/40

12 Picardy Place
EH1 3JT



THE MULROY



A slice of country house charm in the West End, The Mulroy matches classic tweed, silver and china décor with an innovative menu, highlighting local produce.

cal produce.

The place oozes class and style and offers high quality fare.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: cream of celeriac soup; warm marinated sea trout; homemade chicken liver parfait; Brie de Meaux cheese and leek tart; salmon fillet with potato and vegetable gratin; slightly salted cod "Brandade"; braised leg of rabbit in a red wine sauce; braised shoulder of lamb; petit fours.

We drank: Water, coffees.

Total Bill: c.£50 (four diners)

We scored it: 35/40

William Street
EH3 7NG



THE BONHAM

The restaurant at the Bonham Hotel is an absolute knockout, serving beautifully presented, flavour-packed dishes to a consistently excellent standard.

In particular, their soup is always very good, and their risotto as good as you will find in the city.



Their market menu represents excellent value, and their Boozey Snoozy (3 courses, 2 bottles of wine for 4

people, costing £80) is worth seeking out.

On our evening visit we ate: coley and basil amuse bouche, chanterelle risotto, spiced parsnip soup, braised shoulder of lamb, fricassee of truffle gnocchi, roasted coley, cheese board, petit fours.

We drank: sparkling water.

Total bill: £60 (three diners)

We scored it: 35/40

22 Drumsheugh Gardens
EH3 7RN



PLUMED HORSE

Earning its second mention, the Plumed Horse represents everything that a fine dining establishment should be.

Immaculately presented and executed dishes are accompanied by excellent service in stylish surroundings.

Chef Tony Borthwick pulls no punches in his pursuit of culinary excellence, ensuring that diners are richly rewarded with superb quality.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: trio of amuse bouches, ham hock and black pudding terrine, smoked salmon with white crab meat tian, fillet of monkfish with herb and leek risotto, slow braised breast and roast fillet of veal, cheeseboard



We drank: prosecco, sparkling water, coffees

Total bill: c.£65 (two diners)

We scored it: 34.5/40

50-54 Henderson Street.
EH6 6DE

CASTLE TERRACE

Edinburgh's newest Michelin starred restaurant, Castle Terrace offers dishes that are high on flavour, with every last drop of taste squeezed from even the most humble of ingredients.

The carrot-based amuse bouche we sampled, topped with an ash-like cumin crumble was one of the most extraordinary dishes we've ever encountered.



With the spectacle of Edinburgh's famous castle looming above, this place is a must visit.

On our lunchtime visit we ate: carrot, coriander and cumin amuse bouche; broccoli veloute with Dunsyre blue ravioli, smoked eel with panna cotta and poached quail's egg, cod brandade with fondant potatoes; hake with lime marmalade and celeriac, pork cheek, partridge pithivier on a bed of carrot and savoy cabbage; vanilla crème brulee, mulled wine jelly, cheeseboard.

We drank: sparkly water.

Total Bill: c.£90 (three diners)

We scored it 33/40

33-35 Castle Terrace
EH1 2EL



PURLANE

Small but perfectly formed, the Purslane sets out to define the casual fine dining experience.

With excellent dishes, bijou surroundings and very reasonable prices, it represents an excellent value proposition.



Set in the fashionable Stockbridge district, the Purslane has been a really welcome addition to the range of Edinburgh eateries,

since it opened in late 2011.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: leek and potato soup, roast pheasant, pan-fried sea bream

We drank: water, espresso

Total bill: c.£30 (two diners)

We scored it: 31/40

33a St. Stephen Street
EH3 5AH



Best for Value Lunchtime Sit-in



THE DOGS



The Dogs is a staple recommendation of many guides, and there's a good reason why, as it offers consistently high

quality at affordable prices.

Located on the first floor of a New Town town-house, it exudes a simple charm which is matched in the dishes it serves.

Considering, like Chez Jules, it's bang in the centre of town, the value on offer is impressive. Their lunch menu is served throughout the afternoon too, so it is often a great late lunch choice.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: tomato soup, black pudding hash with fried duck egg, smoked cheese and cauliflower barley risotto, toffee rice pudding, cheese board

We drank: water, espresso

Total bill: c.£30 (two diners)

We scored it: 31/40

110 Hanover Street
EH2 1DR



NAWROZ

Middle Eastern food is growing in popularity in Edinburgh, and with excellent value lunches offered in places like Nawroz it's easy to see why.

Their lovely fresh nan bazary (like a lighter version of Indian naan) is really good, their grill dishes impressive (as is the fire in the kitchen), and their unusual cardamom espresso packs an aromatic punch.

Located in the heart of student/Fringe land, it is competitively priced and offers generous portions. Well worth a visit.



On our lunchtime visit, we ate: lentil soup, hummus, Mrishk Kebab, lamb shawarma

We drank: sparkling water, cardamom espresso

Total bill: c.£20 (two diners)

We scored it: 30/40

26 Potterrow
EH8 9BT

ARTCAFE MORITA

A real character of a place on the famous Royal Mile, Artcafe Morita combines a small menu of Japanese dishes with some more traditional Scottish fare.

Like being welcomed into someone's living room that just happens to be bedecked in contemporary art, tasty dishes at very reasonable prices are guaranteed.



The haggis sushi will not please the purists, but is definitely worth a try. For quality, the soba noodle soup

was packed with flavour and really satisfying.

A sushi place with a smile on its face, which is a rare thing indeed.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: soba noodle soup, chicken dumplings, chicken yakitori, leek, haggis and smoked salmon sushi set

We drank: water

Total bill: £12.20 two diners)

We scored it: 28.5/40

204 Canongate
EH8 8DQ



CHEZ JULES

Offering superb lunchtime value, Chez Jules, on a busy stretch of Hanover Street that's packed with dining options, provides simple excellence in the rustic French style.

Their steak is as good as you'll find in the city, and classics, such as coq au vin or moules mariniere, are delivered to a satisfying standard.

Staff are friendly and the setting relaxed, making it a highly enjoyable lunchtime venue.

On our evening visit, we ate: oysters, mussels, onion soup, whole sea bass (2), ribeye steak (3), surf and turf (1/2 lobster and steak), sticky toffee pudding, chocolate mousse, crepe suzette, cheese board

We drank: house white and red, water, port, teas, espresso

Total bill: c.£160 (six diners)

We scored it: 29.5/40

109 Hanover St
EH2 1DJ



TURKISH KITCHEN

The Turkish Kitchen delivers a slice of authentic Turkish cuisine, just off Edinburgh's famous Rose Street.

Catering to sit-in and takeaway customers, their lunchtime menu offers great value, and delivers simple, flavour-filled dishes.

They serve a mean Turkish coffee too, so if you haven't tried this slightly acquired-taste coffee variant, this might just be the place to do so.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: manti, chicken salad, aubergine stuffed with mince, vegetable sote, chicken kebab



We drank: sparkling water, orange juice, white wine, Turkish coffee

Total bill: c.£42 (four diners)

We scored it 28.5/40

122 Rose St South La
EH2 4BB

Best for *Lunchtime Takeaway*

CAFÉ DOMENICO'S

Simply the best lunchtime takeaway in the city, Domenico's deli counter serves made to order sandwiches with a spectacular range of fillings.



Family run, the service is always welcoming, making this place one of Edinburgh's absolute culinary highlights.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: prosciutto, parmesan, sun-dried tomato, and truffle pesto rolls

Total Bill: £5.20 (two diners)

We scored it: 33/40

30 Sandport Street
EH6 6EP



LIME

Its lunchtime soup and baguette deal is the best we've found in the heart of the city centre, in terms of low cost and high quality.

A tiny little place, it's often to be seen with a queue out of the door, but is definitely worth the wait.

The soup is lovely and the rolls generously filled, so this is a definite winner for those looking for an inexpensive, satisfying lunch on the go.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: chicken broth (2), super veggie baguette, bellissimo baguette

Total bill: £6.98 (two diners)

We scored it: 30.5/40

25A Thistle Street
EH2 1DX



FRENCH FANCIES

With a beautiful café space at the back of the shop, French Fancies also rewards sit-in diners, with its lovely range of sweet and savoury treats, all freshly prepared on the premises.



Tucked away on the corner of Broughton Street and East London Street, this place is well worth walking those few extra yards.

Everything exudes Gallic charm and elegance, enticing you to take their lovingly produced dishes to your heart.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: ham, goat's cheese and basil pesto baguette; creamy leek and potato soup

Total bill: £4.90 (one diner)

We scored it: 30/40

42 London St
UK EH3



CROLLA'S

Crolla's serves really lovely lunches, at very reasonable prices.

Their soup is routinely excellent, with a recent roasted red pepper soup particularly delicious.

Service is friendly and accommodating, and there's room for around a dozen folks to sit-in, if that takes your fancy.

Crolla's is a great little place amongst many great little places on Broughton Street.



On our lunchtime visit, we ate: chorizo, brie, salad and pesto on poppy seed

roll, wild mushroom soup

Total bill: c.£3.70 (one diner)

We scored it 28/40

43 Broughton Street
EH1 3JU



CHEQUERS



No frills, no nonsense, just quality, filling, good value breakfasts and lunches is what Chequers

is all about.

Their vegetable broth is a real homespun comfort classic, and their fresh rolls, made to order, are guaranteed to chase the lunchtime hunger pangs away.



Though we've yet to sample them, this strikes me as a good place for a hangover-chasing breakfast roll, too.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: roast beef and mustard 'hedgehog' roll, ham, brie and mustard 'hedgehog' roll, vegetable broth (2)

Total bill: £6.70 (two diners)

We scored it: 28/40

16B Broughton Street
EH1 3RH



Best for *Seafood*

Italian

Style

Indian

Fine Dining

Lunchtime Sit In

Lunchtime Takeaway



IRIS

Located on one of Edinburgh's premier restaurant rows, Thistle Street, Iris serves smart, stylish plates of food, showcasing fabulous local ingredients.

In a fresh, modern setting, service is knowledgeable and confident.

Dishes are as visually stunning as they are delicious, with their lemon sole with chorizo a particular standout.

On our evening visit, we ate: mussels, scallops, swordfish, lemon sole



We drank: sancerre, water, espresso

Total bill: c.£70 (two diners)

We scored it: 37/40

47A Thistle Street
EH2 1DY



SHIP ON THE SHORE

This is Edinburgh's seafood nirvana, located on the Shore at Leith.



In a traditional pub setting, the outstanding platters of seafood are a spectacular spec-

tator sport, firstly, but you can't resist joining the fun for long.

With outstanding dishes to suit a range of budgets and tastes, this is the defining spot to bring the seafood lover in your life when you're looking to impress them.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: fishcakes, cullen skink, haddock and chips (2), seafood platter

We drank: Guinness, white wine, water

Total bill: c.£60 (three diners)

We scored it: 30/40

24-26 The Shore
EH6 6QN



ONDINE

Chef Roy Brett delivers a fine array of top-end seafood dishes in the stylish surroundings of Ondine.

With the best service we've encountered in Edinburgh, this place is an absolute Mecca for seafood lovers with dishes that are fresh and unexpected, it really hits all the right notes.



Mussels mouclade is a dish that should be seen more in restaurants, so it was a considerable joy to sample it on our visit.



On our lunchtime visit, we ate: smoked haddock chowder, brown crab risotto, mussels

mouclade

We drank: sparkling water, espresso

Total bill: c.£36 (two diners)

We scored it: 33/40

2 George IV Bridge
EH1 1AD

Seafood

Pub Grub

Pan-Asian

Soup

Cafe

Sunday Lunchtime

CAFÉ FISH



Scotland's Seafood Restaurant of the Year, we found Café Fish stylish and welcoming, with top notch dishes.

Their lunchtime and day tapas menu offers a range of seafood treats for you to sample.

We put our trust in the excellent waiters, and were rewarded with a lovely array of dishes.

Café Fish offers an ideal way to spend a relaxing Saturday afternoon, with beautiful grub to accompany fine conversation.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: John Dory, potted shrimp, herring, smoked salmon, clams, patatas bravas

We drank: prosecco (2)

Total bill: c.£110 (two diners)

We scored it: 32/40

North West Circus Place
EH3 6SX



CAFÉ ROYAL

The Café Royal's Circle Bar is a very popular after work spot, serving a good selection of wine and real ale, but it's the lovely seafood that's the main attraction.

With mussels (served by the half and full kilo) and oysters (served by the half and full dozen) prepared in a range of different ways, there is no greater pleasure than spending an early evening luxuriating in the sea's rich harvest.



They have a dining room attached, if you prefer the full restaurant experience, but the bar is where the real joy is to be had.

On our evening visit, we ate: a dozen oysters

Total bill: c.£15 (two diners)

We scored it 29/40

19 West Register Street
EH2 2AA

Best for *Pub Grub*

KING'S WARK

With seafood as their speciality, the King's Wark serves terrific food in a traditional pub setting.



I can think of few more elegant dishes than my red mullet with pearl barley, from their board of ever

changing specials. And MJ's hake with potatoes and lentils was equally elegant and delicious.

Packed to the gunwales at weekends, and often requiring an advance reservation, the King's Wark is the regal champion of Edinburgh pub grub.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: seafood chowder, fillet of hake served with puy lentils, potatoes and clams, fillets of red mullet served with chorizo and pearl barley risotto

Total bill: c.£30 (two diners)

We scored it 32/40

36 The Shore
EH6 6QU



BON VIVANT

A smart pub on Thistle Street, which is one of Edinburgh's premier dining streets, the Bon Vivant offers both a dazzling array of cocktails and a stylish range of dining options.



Their starters can all be sampled as "bites", in the tapas style. The selection of main courses is varied and of high quality.

With a lovely wine list and welcoming, dark wood interior, the Bon Vivant is likely to please a range of tastes, so is well worth a visit.



On our lunchtime visit, we ate: leek & potato soup, John Dory with steamed clams and chive risotto

We drank: water

Total bill: £20 (one diner)

We scored it: 32/40

55 Thistle Street,
EH2 1DY

MILNE'S

The "Poet's Pub", Milne's has a proud literary tradition, and boasts portraits of its previous clientele to prove it.

The food is a classic selection of pub grub favourites, with their steak pie particularly good, and their fish finger sandwich one of those guilty pleasure dishes that you sometimes just can't beat.

With a good selection of real ales to boot, this is an excellent spot to spend a cosy Edinburgh evening.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: steak and ale pie

We drank: sparkling water

Total bill: c.£10 (one diner)

We scored it: 28/40

35 Hanover Street
EH2 2PJ



BLUE MOON CAFÉ

An Edinburgh institution and part of Broughton Street's diverse range of entertaining hot spots, the Blue Moon Café blends down-at-heel café chic with a menu of pub grub-style comfort food that's perfect for addressing hungry and hungover people's needs.

Their macaroni cheese has a tall reputation that



has people coming back time after time, their soup is really good,

and their portion sizes very generous.

We ate: tomato, spinach and stilton soup, pea, parmesan and rocket soup, macaroni cheese, chicken and leek pie

We drank: sparkling water

Total bill: c.£20 (two diners)

We scored it: 29/40

36 Broughton Street
EH1 3SB



ECCO VINO



Ecco Vino is a very welcoming bar on Cockburn Street, which has an excellent selection of wines and lovely menu of food, served all day.

Their specials board tends to be the best source of culinary inspiration. It was from there that we were served two good dishes.

A great spot for a relaxing afternoon or evening catching up over a glass of wine, Ecco Vino offers good quality in relaxing surroundings.

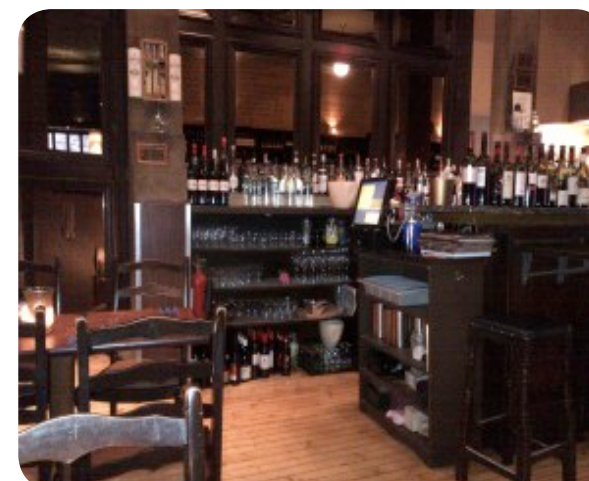
On our lunchtime visit, we ate: leek and potato soup; seafood stew

We drank: white wine, water

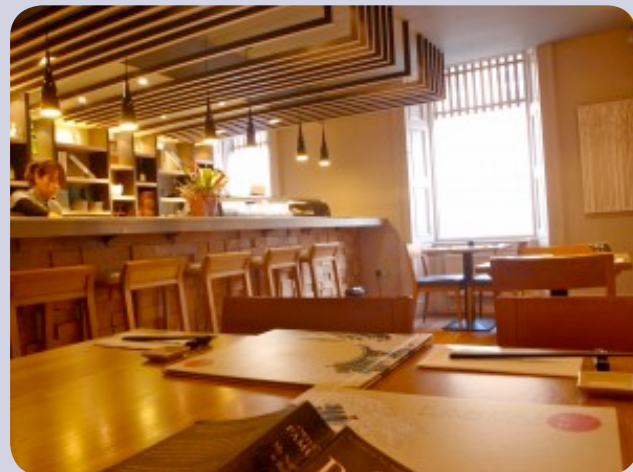
Total bill: £20 (one diner)

We scored it: 31/40

19 Cockburn Street
EH1 1BP



Best for *Pan-Asian*



KANPAI



Kanpai offers Edinburgh's highest quality sushi experience, with exquisite dishes in beautifully serene surroundings.

Two dishes are absolutely essential choices: the miso aubergine, and the sashimi platter. Both are startlingly good.

Elegance and accuracy blend with a sophisticated charm to create a delightful restaurant experience.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: buckwheat soba, sashimi platter, grilled miso aubergine, tuna maki

We drank: water, sparkling water, green tea

Total bill: c.£40 (three diners)

We scored it: 33.5/40

8 - 10 Grindlay Street
EH3 9AS



KOYAMA

Koyama provides an excellent range of Japanese dishes, with welcoming and friendly service.

Their bento boxes are a great way to sample a range of dishes, in one sitting.

We've returned a number of times and tried several dishes, all of which have been delicious, authentic, and freshly made

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: sashimi salad, maki bento, vegetable udon noodle soup, tuna maki.

We drank: water.

Total Bill: c.£30 (two diners)

We scored it: 31/40

20 Forrest Road
EH1 2QN



KIM'S MINI MEALS

Korean cuisine with a ladle-full of fun is what you get at Kim's Mini Meals.

With mis-matched china crockery, including a wonderful selection of teapots, the small restaurant is full of character.

Dishes can be a little hit and miss, but the hits are home runs. The bibimbap is definitely the way to go, and the spicy rice cakes are really good.

A great, fresh insight in to an increasingly popular Asian cuisine.

On our evening visit, we ate: a mix of starters, including potato soup, kimchi, potato pancake, spicy rice cakes, sushi rolls; seafood bulgogi; chocolate rice cake

We drank: rice punch, water



Bill: c.£17.50 per person

We scored it: 30/40

5 Buccleuch Street
EH8 9JN



dishes.

The soup we sampled on our visit had a riot of flavour, which will live long in our taste memory.

MJ's salad was one that was full of flavours and interesting textures and she still dreams of it nightly.

The main courses were standard, good, Thai offerings.

For an entertaining rollercoaster of taste sensations, Time 4 Thai is an excellent choice.

On our evening visit, we ate: soup, salad, crispy monkfish, noodles, rice

We drank: sparkling water, Singha beer, espresso

Total bill: c.£60 (two diners)

We scored it: 28.5/40

45 North Castle Street
EH2 3BG



Time 4 Thai has the feel of a hotel lobby, but provides a friendly welcome and great range of power-packed

Phuket Pavilion is a smart Thai restaurant, covering all the classic dishes you'd expect to see.

On our visit, we went with people who were freshly back from holiday in Thailand, and they were entirely impressed by the place.

For simple dishes, accurately prepared and served, Phuket Pavilion can be relied upon.

On our evening visit, we ate: prawn Pad Thai (3), fruits de mer Phuket, rice

We drank: sparkling water, Singha, red wine

Total bill:
c.£60 (four diners)

We scored it: 27.5/40

8 Union Street
EH1 3LU



Best for *Soup*

ELEPHANT JUICE

With the excellent "one feeds two" principle at its heart, Elephant Juice provides a good range of high-quality soups, served from the soup van affectionately known as "Dumbo".

With four soups to choose from each day, served



with hearty artisan bread, it has a winning formula for summer and winter climes alike.

Operating from the heart of student/Fringe land, in George Square, it's fast becoming a must-visit culinary destination.



On our lunchtime visit, we ate: asparagus "love" soup, tomato bread

Total bill: £3.20 (one diner)

We scored it: 32/40

Today: George Square EH8



UNION OF GENIUS

Scotland's first soup café, Union of Genius is an absolute treasure.



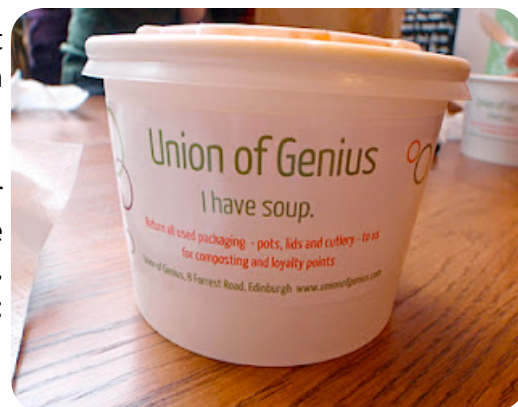
With six soups to choose from daily, and a menu that changes each week, the soup wizards that run it

are hard dreaming up new and innovative flavour combinations that are exceptionally tasty. To find out the day's soup options, follow them on Twitter or Facebook.

Try their bread-bowls — they add a whole extra, delicious, element to the meal!

Bringing together a collective of local producers to cover their baking and beverage needs, this place is another must-visit Old Town location.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate:



minestrone (2), chorizo and kale, and cream of wild mushroom soups

We drank: americano, cappuccino, white hot chocolate and cardamom, Genius mocha

Total bill: c.£25 (soups £4 for large bowl; coffees/hot chocolates £1.80-3) (four diners)

We scored it 32/40

8 Forrest Road
EH1 2QN

NEW TOWN DELI

A take-out favourite, the soup at the New Town Deli is possibly the best you'll find in all the various and varied places on Broughton Street.

We sampled a particularly delightful sweet potato and lentil soup, suffused with gorgeous cardamom.

With a nice deli counter for other sweet and savoury treats, it caters for a range of needs.



On our lunchtime visit, we ate: lentil and sweet potato soup, pastrami, egg mayo and salad roll

Total bill: £4.85 (one diner)

We scored it: 27/40

42 Broughton Street
EH1 3SA



EDINBURGH LARDER

Nestled just off the Royal Mile, the Edinburgh Larder is an Aladdin's cave of beautifully fresh local produce.



Their soup is excellent, and the quality of their ingredients is extremely impressive.

They have a few tables for sit-in dining, a pleasure that will likely draw you in to sampling their sweet treats too.



Popular with locals and tourists alike, this is one of Edinburgh's top lunching venues.

On our lunchtime takeaway visit, we ate: ham, broccoli and watercress soup; goat's cheese and peppers sandwich

We drank: nothing

Total bill: £4.25 (one diner)

We scored it: 31/40

15 Blackfriars Street
EH1 1NB

WHISKI ROOMS

Serving the best soup in the city, the Whiski Rooms is part bistro, part bar, part whisky shop, located at the top of The Mound.

Their lunchtime soup and sandwich deal is really worth sampling, and they do a great line in traditional entertainment in the evenings.

Expert at handling larger dining groups too, this



place has all the bases covered, so is well worth a visit.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: cauliflower soup, chicken caesar sandwich

We drank: sparkling water, espresso

Total bill: c.£10 (one diner)

We scored it 30/40

4-6 North Bank Street
EH1 2LP



Best Cafe

HULA JUICE BAR

Hula is a pure ray of sunshine in the Grassmarket. With welcoming colours, a friendly staff that knows how to make the best coffee in Edinburgh, and a hearty and healthy breakfast menu, Hula is one of our favourite stops and has become



somewhat of MJ's local cafe.

The breakfasts are for those who want to get their money's worth and feel good about their choices as well, which shows through with the porridge, bagels, granola with yogurt and smoothies that fill out the menu.

For lunch, they serve salads, bagels, the famous 'wrapless wrap', daily soups, and smoothies.

They also offer free Wifi and are open from 8-6pm and have been known to do the odd evening event.

On our breakfast visit, we ate: porridge x 2, 1 with blueberries 1 with chilli dark chocolate.

We drank: americano, soya latte, americano to take away

Total bill: c.£15 (two diners)

We scored it: 33.5/40

103-105 West Bow
EH1 2JP

PETER'S YARD



Located in the convenient position on Middle Meadow Walk, this place is a true gem in Edinburgh's cafe culture. It has the best of Scandinavian cooking with its own bakery that offers some of the best baked goods in town.

The array of salads, sandwiches, sweets and breads on offer changes everyday. The coffee is well-made and the place is always hopping, but still manages to keep a cool and relaxing atmosphere.

Even if you don't have time to sit in for lunch, pop in to buy one of their loaves of bread, famous crispbreads, or go to their take-away store around the corner for quick service and the same delicious treats.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: herb tofu 'cottage cheese' sandwich, chickpea salad; herring sandwich; cardamom buns

We drank: filter coffee, apple and raspberry juice, hot chocolate

Total Bill: c. £17 (two diners)

We scored it: 33.5/40

Quartermile,
27 Simpsons
Loan
EH3 9GG



I <3 CAFE

The same people who opened B&B's a while back have now re-opened the cafe as their own creation.

The cafe is bright and airy and serves some mean bowls of soup and exceptional sandwiches and salads from their deli cabinet.



They are open from 10-8pm and also sell wines and beers and are a great place to pop into on the way home from work if you don't fancy a pint in a local pub.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate:

sweet potato and chilli soup, trio of salads, Spanish chorizo and white bean stew

We drank: water, coffees

Total Bill: c.£15 (two diners)

We scored it: 32/40

Haddington Pl,
EH7 4AF



LOUDONS



As one of the first places we quested, Loudon's is still one of MJ's favourite places.

The space is amazingly open and light and the downstairs has a window into their on-site bakery.

The daily specials change and are all well-made and fresh. Their home baked breads and cakes are fabulous and once they make them daily, and once the cakes and food is sold...it's gone! So best make it there in time for lunch and why not hang around and enjoy their free Wifi and the ambiance.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: smoked salmon, egg and bean sandwich, tomato and fennel soup, coconut and lime square, spelt scone and jam,

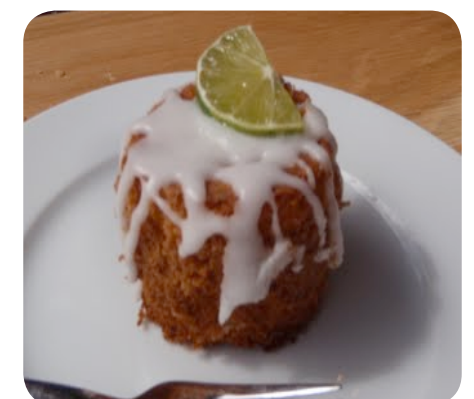


We drank: Black coffee

Total bill: £15 (two diners)

We scored it: 28/40

94b Fountainbridge
EH3 9QA



BON PAPILLON

Part café, part art shop, Bon Papillon is a friendly and welcoming mix of delightful, quirky joy.



Set in the heart of the New Town, it specializes in light lunches and decadent cakes.

The herb scone that's served as an accompaniment to their soups is a particular treat, but it's hard not to fall in love entirely with this lovely little place.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: vegetable borscht with herb scone; hot smoked salmon, cream cheese and sun-dried tomato poppy-seed roll

Total bill: £6.30 (one diner)

We scored it: 30/40

15 Howe Street
EH3 6TE



Best for *Sunday Lunchtime*

PINK OLIVE

Pink Olive is a great little Scottish bistro, which does a lovely line in relaxing Sunday fare.

It serves breakfast and brunch options aplenty,



and a lovely roast dinner.

With excellent soup and good quality coffee, this really is the perfect spot to wile away a lazy Sunday.

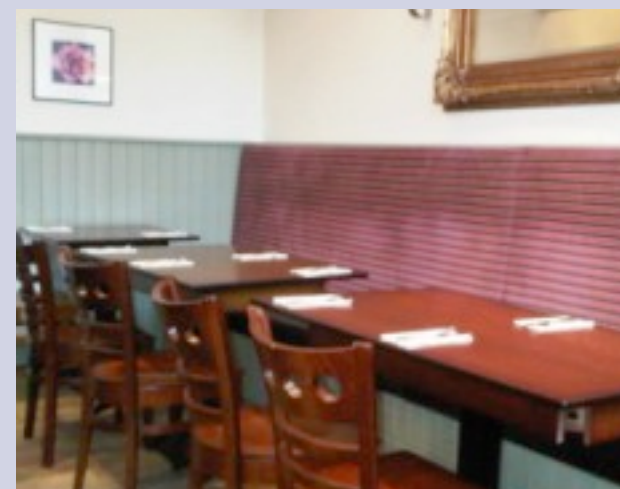
On our lunchtime visit, we ate: beetroot and parsnip soup; slow roast pork shoulder with roast potatoes, parsnips, red cabbage, veggie haggis stuffing, onion gravy, and a massive Yorkshire pudding

We drank: sparkling water, espresso

Total bill: £14 (one diner)

We scored it: 31/40

55-57 West
Nicolson
Street
EH8 9DB



NOM DE PLUME



Nom de Plume's relaxed surroundings are the ideal place to spend a relaxing afternoon, evening or both.

With an excellent range of vegetarian and vegan options, their extensive menu offers a tremendous array of hearty dishes, providing comfort, joy and considerable nourishment.

At the heart of Broughton Street, with its eclectic selection of shops, pubs and restaurants, Nom de Plume has a really pleasingly diverse menu. There



is nothing quite like kicking back with one of their delicious dishes, catching up on the goings-on in the local paper, The Spurtle, and soaking in the atmosphere. Visit soon.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: broccoli and cauliflower soup, onion soup, fish pie, shepherd's pie, chickpea stew, carrot cake, cranachan

We drank: teas, coffees, water

We scored it: 31/40

Total bill: c.50 (four diners)



THE ANTIQUARY

With expert help from the chefs from the nearby Purslane, the Antiquary does a nice line in pub grub.

Sundays are a particularly good time to visit, as you can sample from their brunch or lunch menu, which features a high quality roast dinner, with the choice of meat changing each week.



A good selection of ales mean that you can wash things down with a good local brew, also.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: white onion soup, beef casserole, roast gammon

We drank: Bitter & Twisted, sparkling water

Total bill: c.£24 (two diners)

We scored it: 30/40

72-78 St Stephen Street
EH3 5AQ



THE BONHAM

The Sunday Boozy Snoozy (3 courses, 2 bottles of wine for 4 people, costing £80) at The Bonham is one of the best value options you'll find anywhere in the city.

A very popular ticket, booking is generally required to ensure you get to sample from their excellent menu.

A high quality experience, this is the kind of place you take people you're looking to impress, as it still retains a little bit of a "hidden gem" status.

On our lunchtime visit, we ate: coley and basil amuse bouche, chanterelle risotto, spiced parsnip soup, braised shoulder of lamb, fricassee



of truffle gnocchi, roasted coley, cheese board, petit fours

We drank: sparkling water.

Total bill: £60 (four diners)

We scored it: 35/40

22 Drumsheugh Gardens
EH3 7RN



PORTO & FI

With lovely options for brunch and lunch, Porto & Fi is well worth the trip to Newhaven, although you can also sample their delights in their branch on The Mound.

It pays to book, as it's very popular, particularly on a Sunday.



Their eggs benedict is one of the best you'll find in the city, and the rest of their dishes are similarly

good.

We ate: sweetcorn, coconut and chilli soup, burger, smoked haddock with poached eggs (2), game pie

We drank: teas, water, coffees

Total bill: c.£58 (four diners)

We scored it: 28.5/40

47 Newhaven Main Street
EH6 4NQ
& The Mound

