

# Time Out

## London

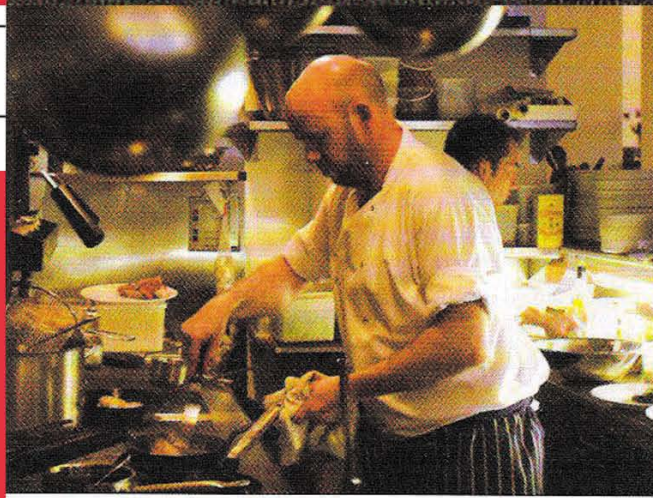
### Reviews

#### The Horseshoe

LONDON'S WEEKLY LISTINGS BIBLE

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No.1873 £2.50



**Thirsty work** Will someone get this poor man a drink?

★★★★★  
Gastropub with microbrewery

Most people said to have beer running through their veins drink to excess. Not in the case of Jasper Cuppaidge. His grandfather was a brewer of quality beers in Rockhampton, Australia, whose company, McLaughlin's, was well known in north Queensland. Cuppaidge promised his mother to resurrect McLaughlin's brewers, but since he moved to Britain ten years ago, its base is north London rather than northern Australia; a microbrewery in the basement of a new dining pub, The Horseshoe, in the heart of Hampstead.

Still, Cuppaidge didn't expect it would take off so quickly. Within two months of opening he's already had to employ a part-time brewer to help him and on the Sunday night of our visit the two McLaughlin's brews - a summer beer and a bitter - had run out. We made do with Adnams, from the Southwold brewery where Cuppaidge has picked up a few of his brewing skills; Sharps bitter from Cornwall was another option.

The Horseshoe is a former Wetherspoon pub, which has been stripped back to its brick walls and painted bright white with a softening trim of eau de nil. The bar, decorated with a gigantic display of fresh flowers, remains where it was, but now has the kitchen of chef Adam Penney alongside. A split-level dining area - not a posh - has been created at back, with tables shaped from old floorboards.

The main bar would be spacious if it were not already so popular, and it can't be long before the tourists that invade Hampstead each weekend make it a regular pitstop. Despite the lack of hanging baskets, horse brasses and mock Tudor details, this is any foreign visitor's fantasy pub, serving real ales and prime British ingredients. 'Quality produce from farm to fork' is the headline on the menu. The meat comes from a small butcher in Saxmunden that purchases from farmers within a 15-mile radius of the store. Fish and shellfish are bought direct from individuals on the Cornish coast. Samphire, smoked haddock, goose

eggs, Montgomery's cheddar and Sutton Hoo chicken have all featured on the menu, which changes with each service.

On our late-evening visit, a large number of the dishes listed were no longer available, though some substitutes were offered. Unfortunately we weren't told this until we had been left for a long stretch to read the menu. The exasperated waitress failed to put a positive spin on it, but last table on Sunday night is one of the few occasions when running out of dishes is in fact reassuring.

The roast of Red Poll beef had a light coating of black pepper and intensely flavoured gravy that made the large portion very moreish. Loin of lamb had a nice crust to its fatty layer and came with a refreshing sauté of courgettes, pine nuts and mint. A starter of honeyed baked figs with soft fresh goat's cheese and walnuts was perfect for the hot weather. We had a lovely crème brûlée with fresh blackberries, but the fruit trifle was too heavy on cream. This, and the exhausted service, were the only low points of an otherwise very enjoyable evening. The Horseshoe is a traditional symbol of luck and NW3 is doubly lucky to have this one. *Jenni Muir*

*The Horseshoe, 28 Heath St, NW3 6TE (020 7431 7206) Hampstead tube. Open Mon-Sat 10am-11pm, Sun 10am-10.30pm. Food served Mon-Sat 12.30-3.30pm, 6.30-10pm, Sun 12noon-8pm. Meal for two with drinks and service: around £65.*

Time Out reviews anonymously and pays for meals

The bill	
Ham terrine	£6.25
Honeyed figs	£6
Roast lamb	£11.50
Roast beef	£12.50
Trifle	£5
Crème brûlée	£5
Hildon water	£3
Pint Adnams bitter	£2.65
Glass Hegarty rosé	£3.90
Sub-total	£55.80
10 per cent service	£5.58
<b>Total</b>	<b>£61.38</b>

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