



The Truscott Arms returns as The Hero Of Maida with chef Henry Harris at the helm

The Pub

The Hero Of Maida, London

Though rescued, renamed and relaunched, fear not: the roast remains



Maida Vale's Truscott Arms, whose Sunday roast was named the best in the 2014 British Roast Dinner Week awards, closed in 2016 after eye-watering rent hikes. The pub was rescued from the jaws of luxury flat development by Harcourt Inns, the group behind Three Cranes and The Coach, both under the direction of Henry Harris, formerly of Racine.

Renamed The Hero Of Maida, it has been given a smart refurb that makes the most of the Victorian building's expansive windows – it's flooded with light and further brightened by giant chandeliers and lots of shiny zinc and marble. While it serves many ales and keg beers, this is less a community boozier and more a neighbourhood brasserie. Nobody is complaining – it is Maida Vale, after all.

Harris is at the helm here too, alongside head chef Steve Collins (Les Deux Salons; Bellanger). Despite being known for their French cooking, the chefs have reinstated the Sunday roast, including a seven-hour slow-roasted shoulder of lamb. The rest of the menu is dotted with Harris' signature dishes, but changes daily, bypassing ubiquitous pub grub and focusing on seasonality. It's here the French accent emerges – it may include coquelet with purple polenta or a grilled onglet and chips. Save room for pudding, though: Harris' famous crème caramel, originally created for Racine, makes a welcome cameo appearance. Jennifer Brady

● 55 Shirland Road, London W9. 020 3960 9109. theheromaidavale.co.uk

Small Bites

+ Where we've been eating this month...



Kerridge's Bar & Grill

Tom Kerridge presents all the flavour of The Hand And Flowers in the luxurious five-star setting of the Corinthia Hotel London.

Standout dish

Glazed omelette
lobster thermidor.

10 Northumberland Avenue,
London WC2. 020 7321 3244.
kerridgesbarandgrill.co.uk



The Hind's Head

Heston Blumenthal's celebrated gastropub is now better than ever following last year's interior refurb and menu makeover.

Standout dish

Oxtail and kidney pudding
with triple-cooked chips
and green beans.

High Street, Bray SL6 2AB.
01628 626151.
hindsheadbray.com



The English Grill

Old-school opulence, style and service with modern British dishes and South African wines.

Standout dish

Himalayan salt-aged British
T-bone with Jospir-grilled
jumbo king prawns.

The Rubens At The Palace,
39 Buckingham Palace Road,
London SW1. 020 7834 6600.
rubenshotel.com



The Hotel

Rockliffe Hall, Darlington

Let off steam at this northern star



According to Google, Darlington is famous for two things: 1) its popularity with Quakers in the 17th century and 2) the world's first steam-powered passenger train journey, which began in the town in 1825, with 600 people taking the first opportunity to leave Darlington for the sunnier climes of Stockton-On-Tees. How about that for a recommendation? Have you ever heard anyone say, "Hey, how about a relaxing, get-away-from-it-all weekend in Darlington?" No, of course not.

Rockliffe Hall, however, may change all that. Owned by Middlesbrough FC chairman Steve Gibson, this award-winning hotel set within 375 acres of countryside on the banks of the River Tees has become the North East's destination resort since it opened in 2009. With three restaurants (including the Orangery, overseen by Michelin-starred chef Richard Allen), a 50,000 square foot luxury spa (with a stunning new hydrotherapy pool and a decking area that overlooks the grounds) and an 18-hole championship golf course, it offers all the amenities of a modern country house hotel housed within a grand 18th-century red-brick mansion.

Of course, it won't be to everyone's tastes. With 61 rooms and a selection of self-catering houses/apartments, it is certainly not a boutique or bijou experience. But for a romantic retreat, a family visit or even as a stop-off en route to Scotland, it's outstanding.

Thanks to Rockliffe Hall, a relaxing, get-away-from-it-all weekend in Darlington actually starts to make a lot of sense. You heard it here first. **PH**

● From £220 per room per night, including use of the spa. Hurworth-On-Tees, Darlington DL2 2DU. 01325 729999. rockliffehall.com