

PLANT-BASED FOOD STUDY TOUR LONDON SUMMER 2019



Bringing insight to life is really important to us here at Reynolds, and we want to do this in a way that is meaningful to our customers and will help them stay ahead of their competition.

On Thursday 8th August 2019, our team hosted a plant-based food study tour across London, exploring various food concepts and their innovative approaches to addressing current industry trends.

Starting in Spitalfields, and then moving onto Shoreditch and Covent Garden, we stopped at nine different concepts, including pop-ups, food to go outlets and restaurants, enjoying an abundance of delicious and plant-based food along the way.

Despite the focus of the study tour being on **plant-based food**, we also saw a number of other key trends being addressed, including **world food**, **insta' gratification**, **customisation** and **sustainability**.

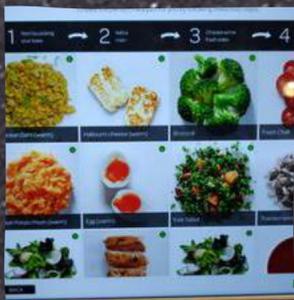
Keep reading to learn more about where we visited and what we saw!





VITA MOJO SPITALFIELDS

- ✓ Customisable
- ✓ Healthy Eating
- ✓ Convenience



Our first stop was Vita Mojo, who are partnered with contract caterer Elior, and currently operate three food-to-go outlets across London. These three sites all utilise Vita Mojo's impressive cloud-based operating system, which aims to deliver extraordinary customer experiences while increasing profitability.

This system allows customers to fully personalise their dishes by choosing their base, protein, side and topping. In addition, their system will calculate the full nutritional content of the dish as well as a complete ingredient list. The customer can then adjust the quantity of the ingredients in order to meet their desired nutritional values.

Orders can be placed easily online, or using a tablet in store, and although they are not fully plant-based, Vita Mojo hits the nail on the head when it comes to healthy eating and providing consumers with accurate information about what's in their dish.

Next we called into Rola Wala, an Indian street food concept in Spitalfields. We tried a few of their vegan bowls, which were incredibly colourful and full of flavour, with the unique taste of each element really standing out.

Their dishes are also customisable, with consumers able to choose both their base and filling. They offer three bases; a naan roll, rice bowl or cauli bowl, and a range of meat and vegan options for fillings. When speaking to the team in-store, they said that their vegan options are definitely their best sellers.



ROLA WALA SPITALFIELDS

- ✓ Customisable
- ✓ Plant-Based
- ✓ Sensory Overload





SPITALFIELDS MARKET

- ✓ World Food
- ✓ Diversity



Our next stop was Old Spitalfields Market, a covered market located in the East End selling fashion, art, music, antiques and food. There has been a market on this site since 1638, although the wholesale fruit and veg market moved to Leyton in 1991.

The market is a continually evolving mix of gourmet food trucks and street food vendors, which we enjoyed trying a variety of dishes from. We noticed there were several ethnic cuisine vendors on our visit, with Japanese cuisine being the most represented. There also appeared to be a number of more niche ethnic cuisines available, such as Burmese and Taiwanese. In particular, Ethiopian vendor, Merkamo, caught our attention due to the extremely bright and colourful salad ingredients they had on display (see picture).

Overall, there was clearly a lot of diversity within the market, providing consumers with an abundance of choice.



THE GREEN VIC SHORDITCH

- ✓ Sustainability
- ✓ Plant-Based
- ✓ Decadent Vegan
- ✓ Insta' Gratification



The Green Vic opened as a pop-up concept earlier this year, with the aim of being the 'worlds most ethical pub'.

Their 100% vegan menu is provided by The Green Grill, who specialise in 'vegan fast food', and they only source ethical supplies, recycling leftover plastic into furniture. In addition, 1 in 4 of The Green Vic's staff are homeless, ex-offenders or disabled, and they support over 40 different charities on their drinks menu alone.

We enjoyed a number of dishes here, including their range of colourful burgers which are made from various veg and soy based patties, and are topped with buns made from either red beetroot, charcoal, matcha or blue butterfly pea powder.

The Green Vic is the perfect destination for ethically conscious consumers who still want to enjoy traditional 'pub-grub'!

*Please note, The Green Vic's 3-month pop-up site has now closed, but they have confirmed that they will be moving to a new, permanent location soon, although further details are yet to be announced.





BIFF'S JACK SHACK

BOXPARK, SHOREDITCH

- ✓ Insta' Gratification
- ✓ Plant-Based
- ✓ Decadent Vegan



Biff's Jack Shack was founded in 2017 with the mission of "making the world's filthiest, most indulgent vegan junk food out of one of the world's weirdest fruit", jackfruit.

We visited their site in BoxPark, Shoreditch, which has a very street-food vibe. Surrounded by a crowd of people enjoying their lunch break, we tried several flavours of Biff's delicious jackfruit wings, which are cleverly made to feel authentic by using sugarcane to replicate a 'bone' in the middle. Some of the flavours we tried included bourbon infused BBQ sauce, maple chipotle, and buffalo hot sauce with blue 'cheeze'.

*Please note, Biff's Jack Shack are due to close their Boxpark site, however they have just opened a new location in Homerton, and are also due to open a vegan bar with Brewdog in Dalston soon.



VEGGIE PRET

SOHO

- ✓ Plant-Based
- ✓ Convenience



Veggie Pret started as a pop-up, but has now expanded to three stores in London and one in Manchester. Following the success of these, Pret has acquired EAT and have announced plans to convert "as many of EAT's shops as possible to Veggie Prets".

Pret has installed veggie only fridges across the entire Pret estate and the most successful Veggie Pret recipes are being rolled out nationwide.

The site in Soho was the first Veggie Pret site and on their launch, the top selling eight new dishes were all vegan, with avocado being the most popular ingredient.

It was great to be able to visit this site to see the wide variety of veggie and vegan options they have available.



MILDREDS SOHO

- ✓ Plant-Based
- ✓ Healthy Eating
- ✓ World Food



Mildreds could be considered a pioneer of vegetarian restaurants, opening their first branch in Soho in 1988. Since then, they have opened three other sites in Kings Cross, Camden and Dalston and have also released two cookbooks full of innovative vegetarian and vegan recipes respectively.

We tried a number of dishes which provide an alternative to a meat based dish, such as plant-based 'Lebanese Spiced Chick'n' and 'Caribbean Jerk Tofu'. Interestingly, although they used to offer a number of vegetarian desserts, their team told us that they now only serve vegan desserts as these have historically been the most popular on the menu, highlighting the increased interest in diets that are free of all animal products.

It was nice to see the vegetarian menu succeeding in a traditional restaurant environment, as opposed to the street food setting that is often associated with plant-based concepts.



BY CHLOE COVENT GARDEN

- ✓ Insta' Gratification
- ✓ Plant-Based
- ✓ Story Telling



ByChloe was originally started in America, but opened its first site in London in Covent Garden in early 2018, and sites have subsequently opened in ICON at the O2, Tower Bridge and Marylebone.

ByChloe's menu is 100% vegan and, in addition to their standard dishes, they launched several UK inspired dishes specifically for their London menu, such as Fish N' Chips, the Royal Roast and Sticky Toffee Pudding. This is on trend as it allows their dishes to tell a story based on the location of the restaurant.

In regard to the food at ByChloe, we noticed a wide range of plant-based alternative ingredients being used to replicate traditional meat or dairy dishes, such as potato-cashew cheese, shittake mushroom bacon, chickpea tuna and scrambled tofu.

The design of the ByChloe site was very different to previous operators we'd visited too, with white walls, neon lights and swinging chairs, it felt like the perfect setting for the instagram loving consumer.





REDEMPTION NEALS YARD

- ✓ Plant-Based
- ✓ Ingredient Is The Star
- ✓ Insta' Gratification



Redemption, which now has three sites, is possibly the world's healthiest restaurant, serving up vegan, sugar-free and wheat-free food, with an alcohol-free bar. This ideology is perfectly captured in their slogan which is "spoil yourself without spoiling yourself".

Like Mildreds, Redemption has its own cookbook and offers its customers a traditional restaurant setting. Following an introductory talk from their co-founder Andrea Waters, an experienced restaurateur, vegan and raw chef, we enjoyed several of their dishes and alcohol-free cocktails.

A notable takeaway from Redemption was that they utilise veg and grains etc. as the hero of their dishes, rather than creating substitutes for the traditional meat components. Examples include the Summer Pea & Mint Risotto, Kale Caesar or Grilled Aubergine and Tahini dish.

We also saw several innovative and new ideas in terms of desserts, including their Banoffee Pie (an oat base with medjool date caramel and banana and coconut chantilly) and their Key Lime Cheesecake (made with avocado, lime and cashew cream).

In addition to the food, it was interesting to see that Redemption's alcohol-free cocktails didn't compromise on taste at all.

If you would like more information about our study tours, or are interested in arranging one for your business, please speak to your account manager or contact us at info@reynolds-cs.com



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