

Camden New Journal

EATING OUT TOM MOGGACH

We're halfway through The London Restaurant Festival – a fixture on the eating-out scene for the past 15 years.

This glossy event runs every October and June and is backed by heavyweight sponsors such as American Express.

But this year, for the first time, there's a spotlight on the restaurants in and around Marylebone Village.

This classy neighbourhood gives you a sense of London's rich history – and is a great spot for people-watching, too.

I cycled to a restaurant called **28°–50°** in Marylebone Lane, just behind Oxford Street, which was an ancient route that crossed through fields back in the 18th century.

Now you pass a showroom for Steinway pianos and Penton's, a well-stocked hardware shop established in 1841.

An all-day restaurant and wine bar, 28°–50° is the kind of place where you can nibble almonds and sip a £5.60 glass of house wine; or splash several grand on a fancy bottle of premier cru.

During the festival, the restaurant is serving up a classy three-course autumn menu with three matching wines for £64.95. This represents decent value in this part of town.

This is just one example of the various deals running this month at Marylebone Village venues, such as 15 per cent off your bill or free drinks – find the full list on the festival website.

There's also a programme of



All-day restaurant 28°–50° in Marylebone Lane

events – now mostly sold out – such as an intriguing regional Mexican tasting menu at restaurant Cavita.

28°–50° occupies a corner site so the dining space is roughly triangular in shape, with tall windows that flood the room with natural light.

At the centre is an island bar; the far wall is lined with dozens of wooden wine boxes.

The à la carte menu for lunch and dinner includes pastas served in small or large portions, such as a Crab Bucatini at £9.95 or £15.95, alongside a selection of main courses and meats sizzling from the Jospier grill.

Their festival menu stars dishes such as a starter of roasted beetroot served with Granny Smith apple and an orange and coconut yoghurt. Or a main of roasted cod with spiced Butternut puree, mussels and a bisque sauce.

I chose the beef tartare, which was skilfully put together. The meat is hand chopped, well-seasoned and at room temperature, with deep-fried

ribbons of Jerusalem artichoke to add crunch and a dab of truffled hollandaise. This is paired with a glass of Californian pinot noir.

A vegetarian main of a celeriac dauphinois, served with a crisp white verdicchio, was indulgent, the layers of slow-cooked veg swimming in a creamy Cep mushroom velouté and topped with hazelnut and mushroom "caviar".

You get some quality cooking at 28°–50° and service was lightning fast and friendly. My only slight quibble was with pudding, described as an "Autumn Mess". This was a praline mousse with chilly slivers of roasted plum straight out of the fridge.

Marylebone is a fancy and historic neighbourhood that is fun to explore.

This festival in October provides the perfect excuse.

28°–50°

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**www.londonrestaurant
festival.com**