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David Hampshire

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David Hampshire : London's Cafés, Coffee Shops Tearooms before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised London's Cafés, Coffee Shops Tearooms:

The number and variety of independent cafés in London has flourished in recent years and if London never had a café culture a few decades ago, it certainly does now! The quality and variety of food and drink on offer has also improved beyond recognition in the last few decades, with many cafés' now serving food that's indistinguishable from a quality restaurant – except when it comes to the bill – which is invariably much lower. In fact if you want to eat a great lunch (and increasingly dinner too) in London and don't want to pay a fortune, a café is your best bet. Coffee sales in Britain have expanded rapidly in the last decade, along with the growing number of independent (and chain) coffee shops. Britain's love affair with the bean has gone, quite literally, from strength to strength; not so many years ago it was difficult to find a café serving anything but insipid filter coffee, but now fresh bean-powered brews are everywhere, thanks in huge part to a legion of expat baristas and roasters from Down Under. The British are famous for their love of a good cuppa (tea) – which, as every Brit knows, cures all ills – although nowadays it's just as likely to be a delicate white, energising green, aromatic and complex Oolong, or a mysterious aged Puer, as builder's brew. London has an abundance of specialist tearooms – many with expert 'tearistas' (tea baristas) on hand to advise you – where you can enjoy fine teas in a delightful traditional setting. Tea is also a vital component of the quintessentially English diversion

of afternoon tea, with London's premier hotels – plus many restaurants, cafés and tearooms - vying to produce the most lavish and original afternoon tea, consisting of exquisite teas and divine cakes, pastries and savouries – and optional champagne. If there's one meal that the British can claim their own, it's the great British cooked breakfast, which is world-famous. This traditionally takes the form a huge fry-up – the full English – but nowadays it's just as likely to include a wealth of tasty and original dishes with influences from around the globe. Likewise brunch – a combination of breakfast and lunch – which Londoners have taken to with a passion in recent years. Nowadays many top restaurants, hotels and cafés specialise in brunch, particularly at weekends. With a copy of London's Cafés, Coffee Shops Tearooms – featuring over 250 venues – you'll never be lost for somewhere to enjoy a great cup of coffee or tea and some delicious food. We hope you enjoy discovering the city's burgeoning café culture as much as we did.

About the Author Author David Hampshire's career has taken him around the world and he lived and worked in many countries before taking up writing full-time in the '80s. He's the author, co-author or editor of some 25 titles, including London for Foodies, Gourmets Gluttons, Living and Working in London, London's Secret Places, London's Secrets: Museums Galleries, London's Secrets: Parks Gardens, London's Secrets: Peaceful Places and A Year in London. David was born in Surrey but lived and worked in London for many years and still considers himself a Londoner. He now divides his time between London and Bath.