



First orders

The Wilton Arms has opened with new owners and a new look, while fine food and wine is the order of the day at Ganymede

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James Corbett, owner of Indapubs, has revamped and reopened the Wilton Arms, which has been a Kinnerton Street institution since 1826

What sort of changes have you made?

We signed the lease just before the start of the pandemic, and so have done less structural work than we were originally planning. However, we've discovered lots of original features by stripping back the building. It's a tiny, terraced-house size pub and we found beautiful, original floor-to-ceiling windows at the front that were half hidden by cladding and some hand-carved features that probably date to when the pub was built, so we've uncovered a lot more than we would have done if we'd been knocking rooms through. We've rebuilt the bar using bits of the old bar, we've put Victorian tiling back in the bathrooms and we've created a garden room at the back with lots of hanging plants.

Will you have a private dining room?

We've created a room upstairs that overlooks The Berkeley hotel that will fit 25 to 30 people. It's a light, airy, quiet space and when we started stripping back the walls we discovered layers of original wallpaper. We've kept it as it is, patches of all sorts of different wallpapers and paints. Then we've taken 200 years worth of paint off the hand-carved wooden shutters. The Daniel Hunt Fine Art Gallery on Lower Sloane Street is hanging art on these beautiful walls.

What's the food like?

Ultimately, it's pub food, but it's exceptionally good, homemade restaurant-quality pub food. We've got a dish of goat's curd stuffed courgette flower, heirloom tomatoes, chargrilled onions, pumpkin seeds, croutons and green olive dressing. But we also have the best fish and chips in London. We want to be a neighbourhood pub, but also appeal to guests in the nearby hotels. It's got to be good enough for my mum when she comes to London, but the postman has to be able to enjoy it, too. It's a local pub.

And what about drinks?

We use the merchant Goedhuis Fine Wines, who have amazing wines, so we'll be heavily wine-list focused. We're also working with small breweries, including the relaunched Allsops, and serving classic cocktails. Our general manager is Nick Tyrie who ran a beautiful hotel in Thailand where he won an award for best wine list, so there's a major focus on the bar. We've got a really fun team and it's going to be a fun place to be.

Adam Quigley, senior operations manager with Fizz, the general manager's dog



Hubert (left) and Oliver

What's the food like at Ganymede?

Oliver: We have an immaculate head chef called Daniel Mertl. He was at the Michelin-starred Glasshouse restaurant in Kew and it's pretty phenomenal what he does.

We don't buy anything in – our bread is made each morning – so we know every single item in a dish and can easily cater to dietary requirements.

What's the building like?

Hubert: It's a lovely listed building with a beautiful frontage. It was the Ebury Wine Bar for about 44 years – a real institution until it closed in 2017. We are building on that legacy – hence the name Ganymede, who was wine pourer to the gods.

So is wine going to be a big feature?

Hubert: We've got 160 bins and have created the list to be accessible. There's also 34 wines by the glass and half bottles. We've also got some fun cocktails, including a chilli and cucumber Margarita and we're doing classic martinis, vesper martinis. And then, of course, at weekends, we've got Bloody Marys with plenty of Bloody Caesars too and we've even created something called a Bloody Susan, which is a Bloody Mary served on a lazy Susan with all the condiments.

Any special dining at the weekend?

Oliver: Sunday roasts are a big focus. It's what you'd expect of a Sunday roast, elevated to Michelin-star level. We've got quail and foie gras Wellington, which is bonkers good.

139 Ebury Street

Ganymede is a new bar and restaurant which opened in September on the site of the Ebury Wine Bar. It's co-owned by Hubert Beatson-Hird (owner director), the pair behind the Hunter's Moon pub in South Kensington.

Walk us through Ganymede...

Hubert: The bar is light and breezy with exposed brick and a beautiful marble bar top. We never take bookings for drinks, and if you want to eat there you can – but if you want to sit with a glass of wine and read the papers, nobody's going to move you. Behind, there's two dining rooms, which each seat 28. The main colour palette is blues and gold with some quirky features like a vinyl of a Rembrandt painting of Ganymede on the ceiling of the loos.

Why Belgravia?

Hubert: People in this area enjoy fine food and fine wine in a relaxed environment and we want to tantalise them with regularly-changing menus to keep them interested in what we do.