

Our guide to Food at the 2017 Festival

The Food Lowdown during August

You may have missed the Assembly Food Festival at the end of July but now we're into August, in Edinburgh that means one thing, ***It's Festival Time!***

With [the Fringe](#) and [International Festival](#) starting in earnest and also the [Book Festival](#) later this month, it can be overwhelming deciding where to start planning what to do and see.

For any foodies there's lots to entertain, great food and drink stalls to sample and lots of pop-ups during the month.

In celebration of the fact that the Fringe is celebrating 70 years since it started, I am going to spill the beans on some of my favourite **70 things to do, see and taste**, which will hopefully give you a little flavour of what's on offer.

Food Festival

[Foodies Festival – 4-6 August, Edinburgh's Inverleith Park](#)

Not to be confused with the Assembly Food Festival at the end of July, which you've sadly missed, the Foodies Festival is a festival within a festival, taking place the first weekend of the Fringe.

Meet MasterChef Winner 2016 **Jane Devonshire**, Great British Bake Off Judge **Prue Leith**, Great British Menu Scotland Representative **Michael Bremner**, Michelin starred chefs **Brian Grigor and Marcello Tully** and acclaimed local culinary talents like **Mark Greenaway**, **Neil Forbes** and **Fraser Allen** as they cook their signature recipes in the Stoves.

Feast in the **Street Food Avenue**; learn to bake in the **Cake and Bake Theatre**; indulge in afternoon tea in the **Vintage Tea Tent**; taste wine, champagne and craft beer in the **Drinks Theatre**; buy from local producers in the **Artisan Market**; kids enjoy the **Children's Cookery Theatre**; enter the **Chilli Eating Competition**; and enjoy refreshing cocktails from the **Bar Bus and Pimms Teapot**.

Shows about food

There's no shortage of shows about food, not only at the Fringe but also at the Book Festival.

George Egg: DIY Chef (Sportsman, Gilded Balloon Teviot)

George Egg cooks really good food on stage using the most unconventional equipment, and you get to try what he's made at the end of the show.

The Thinking Drinkers – History of Alcohol (Underbelly, Med Quad)

They're back with a new show. Enjoy five free drinks as these award-winning professional drink experts definitively prove that alcohol has influenced everything that has ever happened. Ever.

The Gin Whore Tour – Paradise in Augustines

Take a sip of sin and tonic! You'll enjoy four of the finest gins during this slightly naughty one-woman show. Delve into historical tales of hooch and harlots to celebrate the modern gin renaissance.

Mother's Ruin – A Cabaret about Gin – Gilded Balloon at the Rose Theatre

Equal parts historical and hysterical, lose yourself among sailors, barmaids and bootleggers in this darkly comic cabaret. A raucous journey through the history of gin.

And not forgetting the **Book Festival (12-28 August)**, which has a number of **Afternoon Tea events** where you can tuck into

afternoon tea and hear tales on a range of subjects, as well as some great cookery writers.

The ones to catch are: Nigerian cookery writer, [Yemisi Aribisala](#); [Niranjala M Ellawala & Prakash Sivanathan](#) of the Elephant Walk restaurant in London; renowned expert in Chinese cuisine, [Fuchsia Dunlop](#); London-based chef [Joudie Kalla](#) bringing memories of growing up in a Palestinian household where culinary concerns were a top priority; [Davy Zyw](#) talking on champagne; TV foodie and executive chef, [Vivek Singh](#) of the Cinnamon Club; and British-Iranian food writer and human rights campaigner [Yasmin Khan](#). Edinburgh-based [Tom Kitchen](#) is also talking about cooking with game.

Tastings

There's a lot of things about gin happening at the Fringe. There's also quite a few on Scotland's national drink, whisky, too.

The Art of Gin – Hanover Street

Edinburgh Gin presents an interactive, full sensory experience using projection mapping technology, taking you on a journey of gin discovery.

Arbikie's A Club – Merchant's Hall

Arbikie Highland Estate is the world's first single estate distillery producing vodka, gin and whisky from ingredients grown on their farm. Join them for a journey from field to bottle as they explore their international award-winning gin. The Arbikie team will guide you through their world-class spirits, distilling process and perfect serves. A welcome cocktail and samples on offer too.

A Dram is Worth a Thousand Words – Scotch Malt Whisky Society

Home of the largest single malt, single cask collection, The Scotch Malt Whisky Society invites you to a three-dram tutored whisky tasting like no other, in the company of our brand ambassador.



Dram and Smoke: The Campfire Cocktails Experience – The Biscuit Factory

Take a journey away from the main hub of the Fringe to to a woodland campfire hideaway, near Leith, within the unique setting of a former biscuit factory. During this interactive masterclass, you'll be tutored on the ins and outs of creating great cocktails, and enjoy the fruits of your libation labour. With an emphasis on the provenance of Scottish spirits and foraged ingredients, this is a place to stimulate both the palate and mind. The ticket includes two cocktails.



Scotch Egg club presents: whisky on water – Lochrin Belle

Ever wanted to drink whisky, eat cheese, chocolate and scotch eggs while cruising along a canal? Well now you can! Scotch Egg Club brings you a Whisky tasting with a difference, where you'll sample six delicious drams, each carefully paired with tasty bites to eat, on a leisurely two-hour trip on the Lochrin Belle canal boat. In-between drinks you'll be regaled with the hilarious, romantic and incredible folklore of a few hundred years of whisky history. Slàinte mhath!

Pop Up Dining Experiences

Glengoyne Whisky Suppers at Contini Cannonball

From 9.15pm, every Wednesday, Thursday and Friday in August during the Fringe, £30 per person. A fantastic tutored whisky tasting by Glengoyne's brand ambassador with two special samples followed by a sensational two course supper showcasing Scotland, land of food and drink.

Dram & Smoke: Campfire Feasts – Biscuit Factory

Scran, bevvy, general flumgummerie. A Scottish pop-up dining event in a former biscuit factory. The experience draws on the flavours and nostalgia of an adventure by the campfire, where the culinary wonders of a fleeting Scottish summertime are

celebrated. The ticket includes a welcome cocktail followed by a seasonal four-course tasting menu. After dinner (which lasts around two hours), late-night party vibes are the order of the day, with countryside cocktails, great beer and well-sourced wine behind the bar, alongside live music each night.

[Toasted Radish Supper Club – Arthur Canon Doyle Centre](#)

For one night only on 12 August, join fellow diners at a supper club popping up at the Arthur Conan Doyle Centre. Set in this magnificent building overlooking St Mary's Cathedral, expect a meal worthy of a crime fiction heavyweight. Canapés, three courses, coffee and petit fours.

[Faulty Towers Dining Experience – The Principal, George Street](#)

Experience their 10th Fringe anniversary shows in their swanky new venue. With over 70% of it improvised and some new script, every show is different – though chaos always reigns as Basil, Sybil and Manuel serve a three-course meal.

Where to refuel during the Fringe

Eating and drinking during the Fringe can cost you a fortune but play your cards right and there's still good value to be had around the venues.

Eating during the Fringe is normally about refuelling on the hoof rather than lingering for any length of time in a restaurant. However, if you do decide you want a leisurely meal, ensure you book, although many restaurants will not take reservations during August.

Check out BYO restaurants – it makes for a cheaper evening

Edinburgh has lots of BYOB restaurants too, which are worth checking out.

It's worth going off the beaten track, away from the main Fringe venues. Kerry's favourite BYOs are on **Leith Walk**. Try Middle Eastern [Pomegranate](#), Indian [Kushis](#) and [Bodega](#).

Around George Street

The new [Hyde & Co](#), a bar and café at aparthotel Eden Locke is very convenient for the Book Festival and venues on George Street; grab a coffee and one of their amazing cheese and bacon scones at [Wellington](#), also on George Street; or at [Cairngorm](#), either on Melville Place or Frederick Street.

Street Food Stalls

Food at the Fringe has improved over the last decade. No longer is the choice just an unhealthy burger in a bun.

Fortunately now there's no end of **street food stalls** offering everything from vegan to vegetarian, to Swiss dumplings from [Alpings](#) to Mexican and Indian from [Umami Spice Girl](#).

Check out those around **George Square Gardens**; **The Pleasance Courtyard**; **Summerhall Courtyard**; or **the Underbelly's Pasture**.

And if it's raining, seek refuge in one of the many inside bars and cafes at **the Gilded Balloon**. They do great nachos!

Particular favourites:

[The Umami Spice Girl & Boy team](#) have quite the range of offerings for Edinburgh Fringe festivalgoers this year at George Square.



Umami Spice Girl & Boy

This is where you will normally find me hanging out and eating during the Fringe. Spice Girl is returning with some firm favourites from last year including her Taste Star winning Malaysian Beef Rendang curry and Chicken Thai Satay Kebabs. Having travelled to Mexico; the Quesadilla promises to have an even more authentic flavour!

Spice Boy will be taking influence from time spent in Jamaica learning to 'Jerk' with Chicken and Beef on the menu, enhanced with Junior's secret sauce! They're also offering a delicious Cubano (toasted Cuban sandwich packed with pork, Cheese, pickles and more!). See what they got up to on their travels on their Facebook and Instagram pages @umamispicegirl and @umamispiceboy

For sweet treats try [the Crema Caravan](#) – They'll be serving up some favourites from their ever-changing menu of flavours and homemade toppings – from the classic Madagascan Vanilla to Crema Catalana, and the popular Salted Caramel.

Other vendors serving up desserts include the [Crepe & Waffle House](#), [Alandas Gelato](#) and [Thinking Chocolate](#).

Pay a visit to [the Food n Flea market](#) in New Waverley with Rost Eats, Barnacles & Bones, The Buffalo Truck, Pizza Geeks and Knights Kitchen. The Food n Flea is also [the Edinburgh Cocktail Festival](#) location in August.

The Pitt Market team will be serving up steaks and chips at [the Polozzi pop up](#) at [the Arches](#) and [Malones at the Mall](#).

Afternoon tea is a great option

If you want to get away from it, refuel with afternoon tea. Try [The Scottish Café at the Scottish National Galleries](#) on the Mound and catch their exhibition 'Beyond Caravaggio'; and [the Colonnades at the Signet Library](#); [One Square at the Sheraton](#), overlooking Festival Square.

Try a Quintessential Scottish Breakfast

Alternatively start your day with [the Quintessential Scottish Breakfast at the Waldorf at the Caledonian](#). It includes a basket of freshly baked bread and pastries, your choice of specialty coffee or tea, a variety of fruit juices, a selection of Scottish cheeses as well as meats, fruits and

yogurts, followed by their exquisite Salmon Trolley which includes the signature orange salmon. The Quintessential Scottish Breakfast Experience will take you on a journey of discovery. You won't need to eat anything else all day.

And finally, check out **Checkpoint**. It may not be off the beaten track but it is close to Teviot and George Square. It's a place to eat, a place for coffee and a place to drink; in fact, a place for all of it and more. Their bowl food, especially their rice, ginger and chicken, nam pla, lemon and coriander is a steal at £5.

Now go out and enjoy the festival. There's so much to fuel the soul and stomach during August!



Best reader's recipe award winner Kerry Teakle, for her whisky, orange and almond cake recipe.

The Observer Food Monthly awards 2016, held at Freemasons Hall in central London, 13 October 2016

Kerry Teakle of [EdinburghFoody](#) is an Edinburgh food blogger. We give her ** !***