

Juliet's Food Diary

The best pizza I ever had the privilege to much was in Montecatini 30 years ago and I clearly remember the chef had a fag in his mouth when he was making it. In fact there was barely a Tuscan chef or waitress that didn't have a ciggie on the go.

Lets blame EU regulations for ruining everyone's fun. Nobody died from getting a speck of ash in their pasta after all. Sadly I haven't been back to Tuscany since and now have to need to as far as pizza is concerned.

I'm happy to report that High Dive bar on St Leonard's Street is now my go-to for pizza heaven. A quirky and fashionable joint on the right side of hipster and owned by the Civerinos group they have definitely got the formula right here. Thin bases usually lack the juiciness of their stuffed crust rivals but here we have plenty of sauce and toppings as well as a satisfying crunch.



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I enjoyed a cheeky little number with mozzarella, pancetta and Brussels sprouts and my companion an equally delicious offering with spiced sausage and burrata. Fabulously crisp seasoned fries and a wild rocket salad were also served to perfection. Dessert was a diet slaying basket of doughnut bites served with nutella and cream dips. The service is cheery, the vibe cool: you have to go!



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Off to **Continis** for a Piemonte wine tasting. Hosted by Liberty Wines this was a packed event with the opportunity to taste some beauties from one of the most recognised wine regions of Italy. The Vajra Folder to was certainly my favourite and Continis was, as always, an elegant place to be. What is it that makes a restaurant extra special?

In my opinion it's the presence of the owner that consistently keeps standards up and Victor and Carina Contini are the **epitomé** of fabulous hosts and miraculously don't seem to have aged a day after so many years in such a competitive business. I was happy to hear their restaurant at the Scottish Galleries is to reopen in time for the Festival and they've also introduced afternoon tea at Cannonball. My father, giving me a lift to the event enquired if there would be spittoons? As if anyone in Edinburgh would spit out a free mouthful of wine. Do check out Contini.com for future events.

There's an irony that 'street food' seems to be something eaten indoors at tables. One of my favourite places for casual dining, Miss Woos on Bernard Street in Leith has been moved upstairs to make way for **The Fat Badger** pub now occupying the ground level. Trying to describe Miss Woos to my date I defined it as what we might imagine a Shanghai opium den to

look like. Perhaps I ought to have been worried about his ensuing enthusiasm? A couple of splendid cocktails, bao buns, filthy fries and noodles later I could have quite happily settled in for the evening if I hadn't had to go home and entertain the hamster.

If you're going to do afternoon tea, you may as well go all in or go home. **Hopetoun House** are offering a chocolate themed afternoon tea to celebrate the end of lent. And here's me not even realising Lent was on. Oh the regret! However it's at least a month since I drank herbal tea, does that count?



Hopetoun House afternoon tea