

Left to right: Norse's Paul Rawlinson and Simon Jewitt; vibrant plates at Texture; Aquavit's dining room; its duck breast and parsnip dish



Restaurants

This month, we admire a wunderkind in a manor house, scour three of the UK's best Scandi offerings, eat farm-to-plate Italian style and experience Parisian flair in Mayfair



Whatley Manor Wiltshire

The announcement that this luxurious country house hotel would be appointing 25-year-old Niall Keating as its executive chef was met with surprise here at *Food and Travel*. He had big shoes to fill: his predecessor Martin Burge garnered two Michelin stars during his 13-year tenure. However, Whatley Manor's gamble has more than paid off. This Staffordshire-born chef's experience belies his years and his dishes showcase elements from all the restaurants where he has worked, as well as his own precocious talent. Keating's cooking doesn't lend itself to quick bites. A 12-course tasting menu is the order of the day and there's no à la carte option. Oysters with mignonette sauce nod to his time with Sat Bains, yet the use of seaweed ensures they taste like a kiss from the ocean. Whimsical presentation tells the story of his stint in Copenhagen, while Korean and Japanese influences honed at San Francisco's Benu are woven into dishes such as salted rhubarb with umeshu liqueur, a gloriously well-balanced plate. Arrive hungry and prepared to set aside an entire evening and you'll be delighted. *MS. 01666 822 888, whatleymanor.com*



Three for a Nordic feast

Texture Marylebone

This Michelin-starred dining experience stays true to its name, encouraging guests to try food of all textures from start to finish. Opened in 2007 by Agnar Sverrisson, the menu is sustainable, light and healthy, combining modern European food with Scandinavian influences. Try the lightly salted cod from Sverrisson's native Iceland, served with Jersey royals, avocado and Romanesco and end with Icelandic skyr: vanilla, ice cream, rye bread and Yorkshire rhubarb. The dishes are as beautiful as the Georgian building that the restaurant resides in. *EF. texture-restaurant.co.uk*

Aquavit Piccadilly

Forget the starkness associated with the coolest cuisine around, dining here is like stepping into Twenties New York. Not surprising given it's from the team at Emma Bengtsson's two-star Manhattan restaurant. A modern menu comes laden with pretty plates of forest finds such as game, wild mushrooms and berries. Start with a smörgåsbord heaving with crunchy pickles and fresh shrimp and herring from the icy North Sea. For mains, meatballs of the highest order are served with tart lingonberries and pickled cucumber. Round it off with salted liquorice burnt cream. *BG. aquavitrestaurants.com*

Norse Harrogate

After a three-year stint as a 'pop-up' restaurant in a Scandi café, Norse has taken up permanent residency in Harrogate town centre. Its smoked, fermented and foraged menu is all Nordic swagger. Expect small plates such as duck ham with pickled grape and Whitby crab with elderflower, puffed rice and fragrant dill broth. Larger dishes such as hay-baked celeriac with sea vegetables and beer cream or short rib of yeast-glazed beef are best shared. Save room for sherberty tangerine root ganache with buttermilk sorbet and candied pine nuts. *SD. norserestaurant.co.uk*

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