



Tour de Food

This year's Tour de France begins in London. **Vanessa Kendell** suggests great places to eat along the route.

LONDON

Inn the Park, St James's Park SW1 (020 7451 9999; innthepark.co.uk). Choose a table on the terrace of this striking structure and enjoy views of the London Eye. Dishes proudly showcase British ingredients. Try Aberdeen oak-smoked salmon & haddock fishcake with broad beans, and finish with Pear & almond tart. **Mains** £14.50-£18.50

Blueprint Café, Design Museum, Shad Thames SE1 (020 7378 7031; conran-restaurants.co.uk). With amazing views of the Thames, the food, by *Great British Menu* chef Jeremy Lee, is also stunning. His assured seasonal menu includes Warm smoked eel sandwich and Grilled Middle White pork with beans. **Mains** £12.50-£21.50

Pavilion Tea House, Greenwich Park, Greenwich SE10 (020 8858 9695; pavilionteahouse.co.uk). If it's sunny, grab a freshly made, chunky sandwich and relax with it on the beautiful lawn outside. Leave room for sherry trifle, rock cakes and scones. **Mains** £4.95-£8.50; **sandwiches** from £3.10



Soufflé, Maidstone

KENT

The Barn, 507 Lower Rainham Road, Rainham (01634 361363; thebarnrestaurant.co.uk). This smart venue comes as a surprise when you consider the 17th-century building it's housed in. The kitchen isn't afraid to play with flavours – try local pheasant with a Serrano ham potato gratin – and portions are on the large side. Take coffee upstairs afterwards. **Mains** £17.95; **Sunday lunch** £19.95 for 2 courses

Soufflé, 31 The Green, Bearsted, Maidstone (01622 737065; soufflerestaurant.net). Diners come back to Soufflé time and again for its polished cooking and elegant atmosphere. Roast rump of lamb with Moroccan spices and Marbled foie gras terrine with toasted brioche are just some of the dishes on offer. A wonderfully discreet restaurant with attentive staff. **Mains** £16-£19.50; **Sunday lunch** £18.50, 3 courses

The Poacher, Hartlake Rd, Tudeley, Tonbridge (01732 358934; thepoachertudeley.co.uk). From the outside, all looks traditional with the promise of a village pub, yet inside the decor, lighting and ambience are altogether more stylish. Starters include Split pea & pancetta soup, while Lentil & caramelised onion Wellington makes an unusual, yet tasty, main. **Mains** £6.75-£18.50

Thackeray's, 85 London Road, Tunbridge Wells (01892 511921; thackerays-restaurant.co.uk). Undoubtedly one of Kent's best restaurants, Thackeray's has an intimate and serene feel. Chef Richard Phillips delivers a confident and exciting menu, including Smoked mackerel bonbons with macerated pineapple & basil crème fraîche. **Menu du jour** £14.95 for 2 courses, £15.95 for 3 courses; **Sunday lunch** £26.50 for 2 courses



London's Inn the Park

The Chapel Down Wine Bar & Bistro, Small Hill, Tenterden (01580 761616; chapelownwines.co.uk). Wine and fish are the two reasons to visit this modern restaurant standing in splendid isolation next to a world-class vineyard. Feast on fresh fish, cool simply, and partner with a glass of Bacchus Red. **Mains** £9.50-£14.95; **Sunday lunch** £19.95, 3 courses

The Goods Shed, Station Road West, Canterbury (01227 459153). A renovated railway goods shed may give a certain impression, but food doesn't. Lunch dishes, such as Fillet of hake with razor dams & aioli, are full of creative flair, and puddings are sensational. **Mains** £8.50

The three-day extravaganza begins in Trafalgar Square on Friday 6 July, with time trials across London on 7 July. On Sunday, Stage One of the race travels across Kent, finishing at Canterbury Cathedral. For more info about the race and the route, visit bbc.co.uk/sport