



# Northern bites

How the north of England is claiming London's foodie crown

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ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW  
ABOUT ROOTS IN YORK IS  
THAT THEIR BREAD COMES  
WITH CHEESE CUSTARD

London thinks of itself as the most exciting foodie city in the UK, home to boundary-pushing restaurants and sought-after chefs. But there's some bad news for the capital, because the fastest-growing food scene is actually in Manchester. The net number of restaurant openings in the city is 22.3%, three times that of London (6.8%). In fact, northern cities are steaming ahead: Liverpool (18.1%) and Leeds (17%) are second and third. So, where should you eat?

## Roots, York

**Why so good?** From the wilds of the North York Moors to an old Victorian pub in the heart of the city, superstar chef Tommy Banks (head chef of The Black Swan, voted TripAdvisor's best restaurant in the world) has knocked it out of the park once again with Roots. Sticking to The Black Swan's farm-to-fork principles, the modern British menu centres around three distinct seasons: autumn's Preservation Season, winter's Hunger Gap and summer's Time of Abundance. Oh, and the bread comes with custard – gloriously

cheesy Lincolnshire Poacher custard. Where do we sign?

**Chef:** Banks is a *Great British Menu* winner and, at 24, he became the youngest British chef to win a Michelin star for his menus at The Black Swan.

**What to order:** The bread, obviously, but the lamb and fermented turnip bao is a flawlessly balanced mix of fatty meat and tangy pickles.



Marygate, York, YO30;  
[rootsyork.com](http://rootsyork.com)



THE ROOTS MENU  
IS FARM-TO-FORK



SERIOUS INTERIORS  
INSPIRATION AT MANA

## Mana, Manchester

**Why so good?** Manchester might still be chasing that elusive Michelin star, but the rapidly changing Ancoats district has upped its game with fine dining restaurant Mana. Opened at the end of last year, the celestial white space with eight-metre-high ceilings and suspended lighting is headed up by ex-Noma chef Simon Martin and serves a tasting menu that pushes the boundaries of British produce, with unusual ingredients such

as reindeer moss and truffle dulse (a type of seaweed) popping up. **Chef:** Having worked with René Redzepi and Gordon Ramsay, Martin has serious pedigree. **What to order:** The 14-course set menu costs £105, or you can book in for a weekend lunch for £50.

Blossom Street, Manchester, M4;  
manarestaurant.co.uk

## Matt Healy × The Foundry, Leeds

**Why so good?** British classics with a Mediterranean twist are the order of the day – think crab and cucumber cannelloni, and Yorkshire rhubarb with rhubarb sorbet and a vanilla macaron (pictured) – in this beautiful Grade II listed red-brick warehouse.

**Chef:** Yorkshire-born chef Matt Healy has won numerous awards since taking over The Foundry last year. He was a runner-up on 2016's *MasterChef: The Professionals* and worked at the Michelin Bib Gourmand tapas restaurant El Gato Negro in Manchester.

**What to order:** Stop by on Sunday for a heaving platter of 12-hour roasted sirloin and roast chicken – there's a reason it was voted Britain's Best Roast Dinner.

Saw Mill Yard, Leeds, LS11; mhfoundry.co.uk



## Route, Newcastle

**Why so good?** Simple ingredients are transformed into spectacular small plates at this chic bistro, which opened a stone's throw from the River Tyne last year. The wine list is as strong as the food and it ticks all the interiors boxes with raw plaster walls, exposed details and olive-green banquettes.

**Chef:** John Calton is a former *MasterChef: The Professionals* finalist and owner of North Shields' award-winning gastropub The Staith House.

**What to order:** The menu changes regularly, but if they're on, don't miss the crisp rabbit and black pudding fritters – or stick to the three-course set menu for just £15.

Side, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE1;  
routenewcastle.co.uk



SMALL PLATES AT ROUTE  
ARE EDIBLE WORKS OF ART



WRECKFISH CHEF GARY  
USHER IS KIND OF A BIG  
DEAL IN THE NORTH WEST

## Wreckfish, Liverpool

**Why so good?** This neighbourhood bistro is as popular for flat whites and smashed avo as it is for feasting dinners of comforting classics (think braised featherblade of beef with moreish parmesan truffle chips).

**Chef:** Gary Usher has built an empire in the north west, crowdfunding for his laid-back, affordable eateries. The campaign for his sixth restaurant, Kala in Manchester, hit its £100,000 target in just 11 hours.

**What to order:** The buttery steak tartare (pictured) or beef with parmesan truffle chips.

Seel Street, Liverpool, L1; wreckfish.co

## Where The Light Gets In, Stockport

**Why so good?** Since it opened down a cobbled alleyway in 2016, Where The Light Gets In has been attracting diners from across the globe for its hyperlocal, seasonal tasting menus. You don't get to see the menu in advance, so expect to eat whatever has been picked from the restaurant's nearby farm, foraged or butchered that day while you bask in the airy, open-plan loft space.

**Chef:** Sam Buckley has worked with Gary Rhodes and honed his skills at L'Enclume.

**What to order:** There's only one option: the tasting menu (£90 per person).

Rostron Brow, Stockport, SK1; wtligi.co



THE APTLY NAMED WHERE THE  
LIGHT GETS IN IS FAMED  
FOR ITS FRESHNESS