

# Our guide to where you can eat out on a wallet full of change

We sent our reporters out looking for bargain and good value bites.



**The Great THAI**  
57 Great Portland Street.  
The express lunchtime menu is tasty and great value. At either £5.95 or £6.95 you choose from soups, Thai curries, Thai stir fries, all served with jasmine rice, or a stir fried noodle dish, then decide whether you are having it with meat, vegetarian or seafood.  
I have tried and would thoroughly recommend green chicken curry, stir fried beef with thai chilli oil and the vegetarian pad thai fried noodles.  
Opening times weekdays 11am–10pm  
weekends 12noon–9 pm.  
Express lunchtime menu weekdays 12–5pm.

## Gluten-free in Charlotte Place



Kasia Kendzia, Giovanni Dedola, and Rebecca Steel outside Beyond Bread, gluten-free bakery.

By Angela Lovely

Opened in a pedestrian walkway off Gooch Street is a bakery and cafe offering gluten-free and dairy-free products. I paid them a visit in December and chatted to the staff.

"Today is just a soft opening," I'm told by manager Kasia Kendzia who's from Poland. "We'll be officially open in January when we'll have a full range of products." During my visit they were inviting people to come in to try some free samples.

I try a piece of banana cake and ginger bread and realise I can't interview them with my mouth full of food. But I'm tempted to have more of such delicious banana bread.

From the basement emerges a woman dressed in a white baker's outfit. Are you

the baker? I ask. "No, I'm the development chef," says Amanda Parker. She tells me about her passion for gluten-free baking as she herself is gluten-intolerant.

She explains that some people react very badly to gluten — the protein found in wheat and other grains. Some people are gluten-intolerant while others can have coeliac disease which is far more serious.

The shop has a range of sandwiches, cakes, mince pies, pastries, quiches and loaves. They also do dairy-free and vegan. All the bread and cakes are baked on the premises. There's coffee to have in or take away. If there's a demand they may supply wholesale gluten-free food to local shops and restaurants.

*Beyond Bread: Gluten-Free Bakery, 2 Charlotte Place, Fitzrovia, London W1T 1SB.*



**Kua 'Aina, 40 Gooch Street**  
Warm and friendly with Hawaiian atmosphere. Prices around £5 to £8. The Lava grilled meat burgers and Mari Mari fish fillets are good. Several vegetarian options available. The thyme and garlic Portobello mushrooms are delicious. Popular malted vanilla milk shakes and good coffee. Glasses of cooled cucumber, mint or lemon water served to all. Licensed.  
Open 7 days a week for breakfast, lunch and dinner.



**Italia Uno, 91 Charlotte Street.** This popular sandwich bar and cafe has been around for nearly 20 years serving up reasonably-priced food. Open all day and most weekends it is a real Italian cafe run by real Italians. It is also well known to football fans as the London home of the Napoli Fans Club. A freshly made sandwich and a coffee will cost less than £6.

**The Mosque, 46 Gooch Street (entrance in Charlotte Street)**  
A large helping of pilau rice with spinach and chick-peas, with ginger beer, is very filling and tasty for £3.60. Non vegetarian options also available. Our visitor was the only woman there but nobody seemed remotely concerned she was not wearing a headscarf. Is this the cheapest hot lunch in Fitzrovia?



**Dino's Deli, 22 Charlotte Place**  
Toasted ciabatta or focaccia sandwiches are so popular you'll need to queue in the alley at lunchtime. Also parma ham, mozzarella, tomato, olive oil, oregano and basil. Massive fresh sandwiches around the £5 mark. Also gorgeous rich arancini served with roasted vegetables or salad and a selection of pasta. They stock a vast array of imported Italian foodstuffs too. Open Monday to Saturday 9am–5pm.



Vegetarian breakfast for £5.50 at Ishta's



**Ishta's Cafe, 61 Cleveland Street**  
At just £5.50 the vegetarian breakfast contains fried tomatoes, mushrooms, beans, hash browns, haloumi cheese, two eggs, roast pepper, and toast. For the same price the full English breakfast contains, eggs, bacon, sausage, tomato, hash brown, beans, mushrooms and toast. Other meals such as chicken curry with rice, or lasagne with salad are £5.50 to take out or £6.50 to eat in. Fresh oranges are squeezed in front of you to make the juice.



**ICCO Italian, 46 Gooch Street**  
Lovely aroma from the freshly made pizzas (£3.95 for a Margherita). Free croissant with every hot drink from 7am to 11am. Greek salad, fruit salad, vanilla cheesecake, freshly made smoothies, juices and coffee. TV and daily newspapers. Open every day from 7 or 8 till late



**Gigs, 12 Tottenham Street**  
For generations this has been home to local students (later professors) in their quest for cheap filling food. The vegetarian burger is now the cheapest at £6.90 for a sit down meal. The cheapest take away is £5.20 for kalamari, but for £5.80 you can get cod, haddock, rock salmon or scampi.  
Open Monday to Saturday 10am–11pm.



**Kin, 22 Foley Street**  
A salad from the several on offer in an imaginatively tiered display costs £5, with home made bread another 50p. Stuffed aubergine is £4.50, and the soup (broccoli, mushroom and carrot) is £3.90. They also serve that New York staple - smashed avocado on toast, plus a large selection of cakes and organic juices, all made on the premises. Open Monday to Friday 8am–6pm, Saturday 10am–4pm.



**Julia's Meadow, 44 Newman Street**  
Friendly and homely. One of the best cafes in Fitzrovia. Julia's Meadow serve a really good selection of salads and fillings, nicely dressed. Have with meat lasagne, vegetarian pasta, chilli con carne or oven baked jacket potatoes. All around £5.



**Olives Indian Cuisine, 20 Cleveland Street**  
For £2.25 you can get chicken or lamb curry, and for £5.95 you can get tandoori chicken or prawn curry. The house speciality is chicken tikka masala at £6.95. The restaurant also does take aways and free home delivery.  
Open Monday to Saturday 12–2:30pm and 6–11:30pm, Sunday 5:30–11:30pm.



Marinara pizza for £4.50 at Franca Manca



**Fish Bone, 82 Cleveland Street**  
A small cod can be had for £4.80, and for just £5.40 you can have a fish burger, chicken burger, or veg burger. Pie and chips is just £4.40. Take away prices for less. Open Monday to Thursday 11:30am–10pm, Friday 11:30am–11pm, Saturday 4–10pm.



**Russi Espresso Bar, 23 Rathbone Place**  
Lunch time offer of free vegetable soup with every order of filled bap, focaccia or ciabatta bread makes a meal for under £5. Home cooked speciality dishes include pasta and Spanish omelettes. Roast coffee. Early breakfasts with daily newspapers and open Monday to Saturday until 6pm.



**Franks Coffee House, 50-52 Great Titchfield Street**  
An unpretentious old school breakfast place with lovely coffee and many choices for under £5. Chicken escalope on ciabatta is recommended. Outside tables catch the sun. Open Monday to Saturday 6am–6pm.



**Franco Manca, 98 Tottenham Court Road**  
The marinara pizza of tomato, garlic an oregano suited our correspondent fine (with wild broccoli, kale or wild mushrooms) and cost just £4.50. To take away it is just £4, which is less than many supermarket pizzas. Many ingredients are organic, including the tomatoes, and the source of all the ingredients are listed on the menu. The most expensive of the six pizzas on the menu is £6.95.  
Open Monday to Thursday 11:30am–11pm, Friday and Saturday 11:30am–11:30pm, Sunday 12noon–10pm.



**Indian YMCA 41 Fitzroy Square**, is one of central London's best value eateries. This plain, unpretentious dining hall has freshly prepared canteen food, offering a conventional Indian menu of rice, dhals and curries, as well as a selection of tasty sides. Weekday lunchtimes it's pay-per-dish, each item is under £5, rice and vegetarian options £2 or less. Evenings and weekends you pay £8 for all-in meal which includes simple desserts and coffee (you can even go back for second helpings!). It is a fantastic option for a cheap, healthy meal you can happily fill yourself up for a wallet full of change.  
Weekday lunch 12–2, weekend lunch 12:30–1:30 dinner everyday 7–8:30



**Double J's, 333 Euston Road.** This traditional cafe serving all-day breakfasts used to be on Charlotte Street. Now in new premises they have more seating and the choice of food is even better. Clean, cheap and always cheerful this is a favourite of some *Fitzrovia News* editors who need replenishing after taking Fitzrovia's evil property developers to task. Here you can get a meal and a coffee or tea for around £6.



**Rasa Express 327 Euston Road**  
Lunch is served in a plastic tray with five compartments, the biryani box costs £5.00 and contains chicken biryani, flat bread, dhal, vegetable curry, shredded spiced vegetable and rice pudding you can sit down or takeaway. Chicken curry box £4.50, vegetarian box £4.00, and snack options are available. The South Indian food is fresh light and delicious, an excellent value lunch.  
Open weekday lunchtimes 12–3pm