

LONDON NOW



In 1965, in the throes of London's "Swinging" era, *Vogue* editor Diana Vreeland proclaimed: "London is the most swinging city in the world." In the late '90s, it was "Cool Britannia." Fast-forward to 2012, and there's a charm for the multicultural metropolis that's once again buzzing in the international spotlight thanks to British Fashion Week, the London Design Festival and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, which is ensuring that the city will be one giant royal anniversary party. And then there's the Summer Olympics. It's part of yet another trifecta for London—a city that hosted the games in 1908, 1948 and now in 2012. Welcome to "London 3.0," and the people who are making it great.

BY SHANA TING LIPTON
ILLUSTRATIONS BY KATIE EDWARDS



(Emeli Sandé continued from previous page)

deciding on neuroscience. Not exactly the typical musician's backup plan. "Medicine was challenging, and it seemed like such a cool career," she says. "Something where you could be really scientific but at the same time interact with human beings rather than being locked in a lab somewhere."

She graduated with her neuroscience degree, but even with such a demanding course, she concentrated on music first—Sandé sang jazz standards in Glasgow hotel lobbies when she wasn't studying for psychiatry finals. At 25, she's been dubbed Simon Cowell's "favorite songwriter," with credits ranging from Brit R & B divas such as Leona

Lewis to English rap for the likes of Professor Green. And her understanding of the human brain has come in handy after all. "When I was asked specifically to write for Susan Boyle," she explains, "I tried to meet as many people from the label that

knew her. I tried to imagine what her life must be like and what type of lyric would really be believable coming from her."

Ultimately, though, Sandé believes songwriting is not a science. "I write from instinct," she says. "The best songs I have are the quickest to write, with the least thought process. They just kind of come out." Still, does she know which part of the brain they come from? "I guess it would be on your right side somewhere," she says. "It's definitely not your frontal lobe. I know that much." She thinks for a minute. "Yeah, your hippocampus is coming into play somehow. Memory."



BENEDICT CUMBERBATCH

GEEK CHIC

So often, British men crossing over into U.S. film and television are relegated to playing the villainous mastermind or the geeky nerd. Rising star Benedict Cumberbatch has explored a bit of both. He portrayed Stephen Hawking in the BBC drama *Hawking*, and now he gets to play a villain (within a geek franchise) in J. J. Abrams' *Star Trek* sequel (2013). American audiences may know him best for his role in *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*.

The nerd-oriented facet of his typecasting seems to stem not only from his patrician looks and presence (and name), but from his upbringing as well. Cumberbatch grew up in a world of privilege in London's Kensington, attended the exclusive Harrow School and now lives in well-heeled North London. He's told the press that he believes that—for better or worse—his roles as "slightly asexual, sociopathic intellectuals" come with the territory of being perceived as a "posh actor" in England. Nevertheless, Cumberbatch is bound to thrill trekkies who have been weened on the Shakespearian swankiness of Patrick Stewart and know a good geek villain when they see one.

HOSTING THE TORCH

Lord Sebastian Coe, chairman of the London Organizing Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games, might be dubbed the U.K.'s Arnold Schwarzenegger, if only for the fact that he too has been both an Olympian and a successful politician. The London-born baron was a member of parliament in the 1990s, and with 12 world track records to his name and four Olympic medals on his mantle (two gold, two silver), Coe has played the game from both sides—with outstanding results.



SEBASTIAN COE'S PICKS FOR 2012'S ATHLETES TO WATCH:

 MO FARAH , 10,000m and 5,000m (Great Britain)	 DWIGHT PHILLIPS , Long jump (USA)
 SEBASTIAN COE'S PICKS FOR 2012'S ATHLETES TO WATCH:	 KIRANI JAMES , 400m (Grenada)
 JESSICA ENNIS , Heptathlon (Great Britain)	 SALLY PEARSON , 100-meter hurdles (Australia)
 DAI GREENE , 400-meter hurdles (Great Britain)	 DAVID RUDISHA , 800m (Kenya)



SPEAKEASY SASS

PHOTOS BY MARK PARREN TAYLOR

The jaunty magic of a Duke Ellington tune, the thrill of downing a mint julip in the basement of an illegal club—that's London's speed these days, as the city embraces a trend imported from America and its Prohibition past.

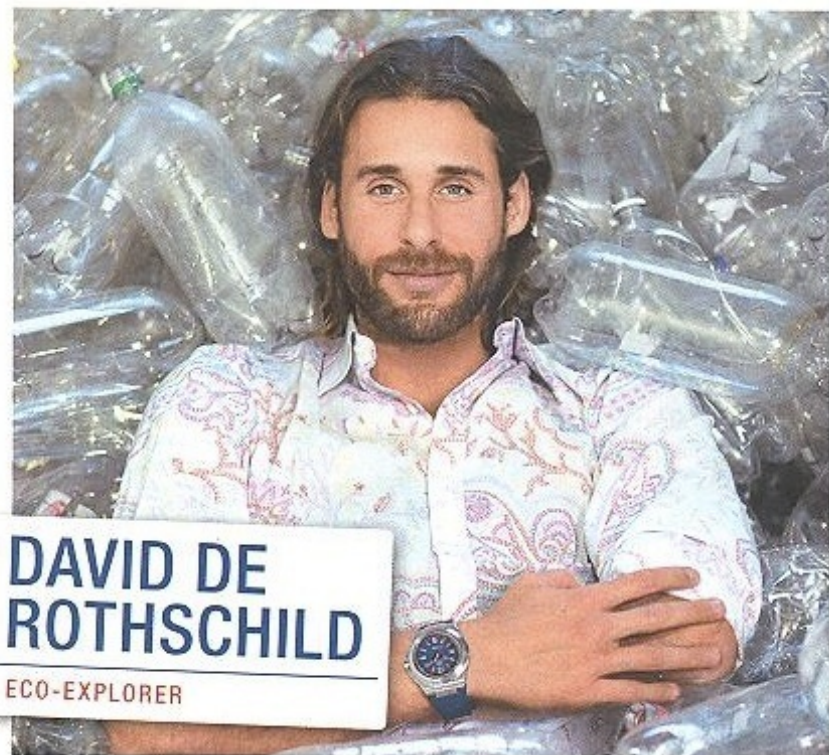
» The speakeasy nights that take place every other Sunday at **J. Sheekey** ❷, a legendary oyster bar and restaurant on a quiet street near Covent Garden, are often sold out. Founded before Prohibition, in 1896, the chic deco-style spot is lined with black-and-white portraits of West End theater players and film actors such as Ingrid Bergman. On speakeasy eves, thespians perform improvisational musical theater behind the oyster bar. "Everyone who sits around the bar is part of the performance as well," says general manager Marco Fazzina. "They burst into song and a musical erupts!" Entrance to the spectacle is £35 and includes an unlimited seafood dinner and one cocktail; bookings are recommended as early as 30 days in advance. j-sheekey.co.uk

» Inconspicuous entrances are markers of speakeasy bars such as **Marylebone's Purl** ❸, a basement watering hole that serves up some smokey concoctions in a neo-Dickensian setting. purl-london.com

» The three-story **ECC Chinatown** ❹ in Central London is a Parisian take on the trend, with its copper-plated ceilings, a living room atmosphere, classic funk and soul DJs and refreshing cucumber-infused St-Germain-des-Prés cocktails. The Paris-originated bar has also expanded its reach to New York's Lower East Side. chinatownecc.com

» **Islington's 69 Colebrooke Row** ❺ (self-dubbed "The Bar with No Name") is just the sort of dimly lit, stylish, under-the-radar spot that a British version of Don Draper might frequent. It hosts jazz nights and gin and bourbon "master classes," so you can polish your cocktail skills. 69colebrookerow.com





DAVID DE ROTHSCHILD

ECO-EXPLORER

London-born environmentalist/adventurer David de Rothschild is emblematic of a new generation of British explorers—a heritage whose godfathers include David Attenborough and, further back, Captain Cook. His take on the environment is as fresh, creative and eclectic as de Rothschild himself.

He rode horses with the junior British team in his youth, influenced by his uncle, Olympic medalist equestrian Peter Robeson. Later, he hit a different trail, earning a diploma from the College of Naturopathic Medicine in London. This was, he says, the logical predecessor to his environmental work and related travels.

In 2010, de Rothschild sailed the Pacific Ocean from San Francisco to Sydney on *Plastiki*, a catamaran made of 12,500 repurposed plastic bottles. He's one of 42 people to have reached both poles. But the laid-back entrepreneurial activist says there are many ways to break out of the mold: "Adventure doesn't have to take the form of climbing a mountain and mounting a flag. It can be making the choice between using a car and a bicycle to get to work everyday—an adventure, especially in London."

When he's not traversing the world for a cause, de Rothschild might be found taking pause in his beloved public gardens of London, exploring verdant patches built around old churches and squares: "London is one of the most magical cities, where you can get lost and find these special spots."

In this vein, MYOO, his environmental adventure organization, is now setting its sights on the ecological ramifications of city living. De Rothschild launched MYOO's website last spring as a forum in which to continue discussing the eco issues highlighted by his journeys. "There is no finish line with sustainability," he says. "It's not a sprint, it's a marathon."



OLYMPIC ARTISTRY

"You inspire me with your determination and I love you." These words, inscribed above two birds kissing on a poster created by British artist Tracey Emin for the London 2012 Paralympic Games, are a "love letter," she says. Emin and 11 other leading U.K. artists were invited to

create such posters for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The public will get the chance to view the artworks at the Tate Britain during a free exhibit that's part of the London 2012 Festival, which opens June 21. The nationwide celebration of the arts runs for 12 weeks through September 9. Among the participants are Damon Albarn, Cate Blanchett, Stella McCartney, Jude Law and Vivienne Westwood.

ZADIE SMITH

COMMUNITY CRUSADER

Twelve years ago, Zadie Smith's debut novel, *White Teeth*, dazzled the international literary scene, effectively securing her a place as one of the most exciting and critically acclaimed newcomers at the tender age of 24. The book explores the multicultural tapestry of London along with its concomitant prejudices, and it was clearly personal for Smith, who grew up in North West London with a Jamaican mother and a British father. Two other novels followed: *The Autograph Man* (2002) and *On Beauty* (2005). Now Smith is coming full circle back to where it all started with her latest novel, *NW*, an abbreviation for North West London, the story's milieu. It follows the lives of four people who grew up in low-income council housing.

Although the 36-year-old scribe has taught creative writing at New York University since 2010, *NW* continues to beckon, even beyond her literary work. Last year, she joined in a heated campaign to keep her local library in London's Kensal Rise from closing, calling libraries "gateways to better, improved lives." The branch was first opened in 1900 by Mark Twain and had endured for more than a century. However, Smith's impassioned public plea was sadly not enough to keep it from shuttering. *NW* is scheduled to be released by Penguin in September.





ALICE TEMPERLEY

TRUE BRITISH

The British flag has been co-opted in pop culture as an emblem of "Cool Britannia" past and present, and it's a fitting symbol for British fashion designer Alice Temperley, whose work embraces both heritage and innovation. "I am obsessed with the Union Jack," says the 36-year-old designer, whose fans include Pippa Middleton, Heidi Klum and Emma Roberts.

A painted rendition of the Union Jack adorns the façade of Temperley's head office on Notting Hill's Colville Mews. For her casual brand, ALICE by Temperley, she has created an oversized, draped pullover that bears the famous red, white and blue design. And the flag is emblazoned across

Temperley's beautiful hardcover book, *True British*, which celebrates a decade-plus of her international lifestyle brand's existence. The archival tome is the result of editing down more than 300,000 images, including Polaroids, "in the magpie style of my life," says the designer, who is known for her love of handmade aesthetics, including artisanal crafts, sketches and weaving.

Temperley London was launched during London Fashion Week in 2000, and since then, British fashion has noticeably evolved, the designer says: "London has become more of a serious player in terms of Fashion Week. There is a lot of incredible talent coming out of London at the moment—a huge amount of raw talent, and that is very exciting!"

Part of the London buzz, she admits, relates to the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the Olympics. Temperley has even gone so far as to design a fine cashmere-blend, medal-print scarf—an homage to the Summer games—that will be available from June onward. However, even without such public, international markers, she says the city is teeming with possibility. "I have loved London since the day I got here 18 years ago [from Somerset, England]. It is a multifaceted place... one of the most important cities in the world." When it comes to London fashion, she advises: "The best place to see unique British style is out and about on the streets of London, where people are experimental rather than safe."

temperleylondon.com



GOLBORNE ROAD

PHOTOS BY JAN BALDWIN

Notting Hill was once a gritty hangout for hippies and rockers such as Mick Jagger. It's where Led Zeppelin recorded *Led Zeppelin IV*. And Jimi Hendrix ultimately found his final resting place in the area on Lansdowne Crescent.

Although still funky today, Notting Hill has come of age commercially. The neighborhood is now home to an American Apparel store, and it's inextricably linked to the 1999 eponymous Hugh Grant box office hit. But the edgy, multicultural spirit of the quarter remains relatively untouched in one of its less publicized pockets, Golborne Road.

Many visitors don't think to walk north on Portobello Road—home to the world's most famous market—and past the giant cement overpass known as the Westway. Just beyond, on Golborne Road, a multicultural smorgasbord awaits: Moroccan, Portuguese, Lebanese, Indian and Spanish cafés; halal butchers; bakeries; shops and a daily market (closed Sundays). Antique clothing, furniture and knickknack boutiques are also a signature of the street, which was once part of the Great Forest of Middlesex, an ancient London woodland. Shops didn't start popping up until the latter part of the 19th century.

"I don't think people realize that Golborne Road exists," says Tony Richardson, who owns **Arbon Interiors** (80 Golborne), a fireplace shop and antiques store that sells some exquisite framed paintings and fireplaces. "Once people have been here, they never forget it; it's eclectic and original." The existence of offbeat retailers such as **Les Couilles du Chien** (65 Golborne) confirms that. It's known for its old taxidermic mounts and glass-encased butterflies, and Les Couilles happens to be a favorite of fashion designer Alice Temperley. So is **Relik** (8 Golborne), a high-end vintage clothing boutique slightly off the main thoroughfare that carries Chanel, Halston and Yves Saint Laurent.

If exotic and colorful fabrics such as Saint Laurent's are appealing, head to **Waris Vianni & Co.** (85 Golborne) for brightly hued Indian artisanal fabrics, quilts, throws and pillows, as well as European wares. Moroccan garb, slippers, oils and housewares can be found at **Fez** (71 Golborne) and foods at **Le Marrakech** (64 Golborne).

Grab a drink, feast on gastropub fare and catch a football match at **The Earl of Portobello** (36 Golborne), linger over lattes and gluten-free muffins at **Golborne Deli** (100 Golborne) or snack on a bolo rei at the Portuguese **Lisboa Patisserie** (57 Golborne).

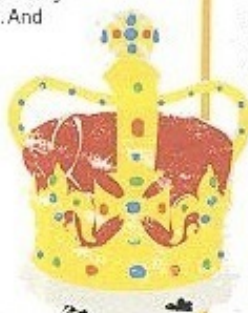
It's easy to understand why fashion designer Stella McCartney co-opted and restyled a chapel on Golborne for her London office. Also headquartered here: Rough Trade, the record label of bands such as The Strokes, Sufjan Stevens, Jarvis Cocker and Belle and Sebastian.





DIAMONDS ARE FOREVER

This month, Queen Elizabeth II celebrates 60 years of her reign with various events throughout the United Kingdom, collectively dubbed The Queen's Diamond Jubilee. And what a reign it's been.



- » In 1952, after her father King George VI's death, she assumed the position of ruler but was not officially crowned until June 2, 1953. It was the first time the ceremony was broadcast on TV, making her the pioneer of a new generation of modern British monarchs.
- » The queen has had more than her share of diamonds—anniversaries, that is. She is the first British monarch to have celebrated a diamond wedding anniversary (60 years in 2007).
- » Last year, on another momentous occasion, the queen visited The Republic of Ireland, making her the first British monarch in nearly a century to do so.
- » Also in 2011, under her reign, a new feminist precedent was set for the monarchy when it was decreed that female royals would be granted the same rights to ascend to the throne as male royals. This doesn't affect the current royal lineup, but it could apply to Prince William and Kate Middleton's future child, if they have a girl. "She" may have a lot of waiting around to do, however, as Prince Charles is next in line, followed by Prince William. And the queen appears to be in the pink. She's just a few years shy of beating out her great-great grandmother, Queen Victoria, for the title of longest-reigning British monarch.

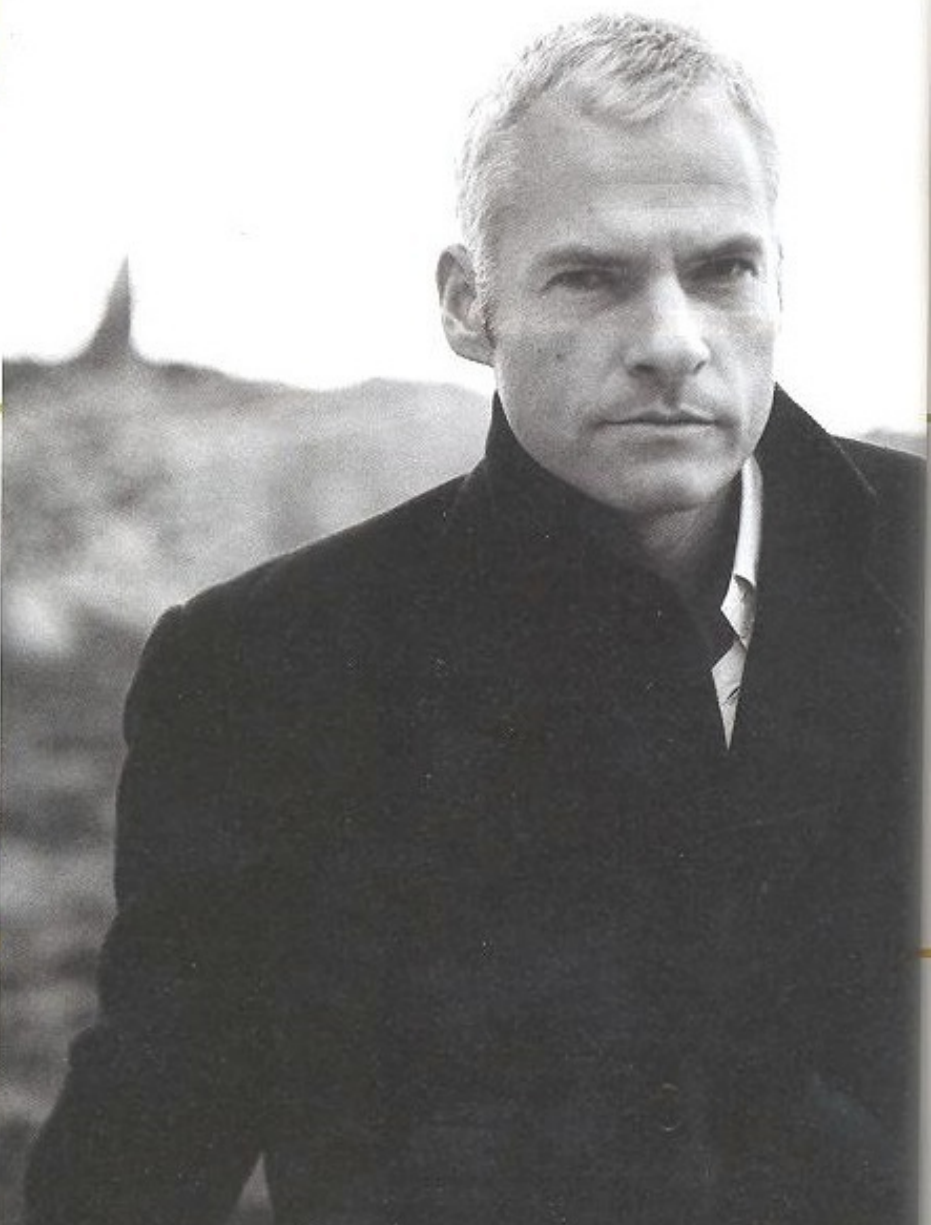
MARTIN McDONAGH

DIE LAUGHING

London-born playwright and director Martin McDonagh—like other great British crossover talents such as Harold Pinter—began his career in the theater. But international fame came after directing the character-driven noir tragicomedy *In Bruges* (2008), McDonagh's big-screen, critically acclaimed debut about a pair of murderous hit men with grit.

McDonagh's anticipated follow-up, *Seven Psychopaths*, is set for release in late 2012. In it, McDonagh once again directs Colin Farrell, this time supported by the added flair of co-stars Woody Harrelson and Christopher Walken, with the indie cachet of Tom Waits for good measure.

The film chronicles a screenwriter (Farrell) and his unlikely involvement in the criminal underworld of Los Angeles. In true McDonagh fashion, the comedic details punctuating the brutal milieu will likely not be forgotten. Harrelson's character is apparently a gangster with a soft, fluffy side, literally—he loves his pet Shih Tzu and goes ballistic after the dog is abducted by Walken's character, a professional dognapper.



CELEBRATE THE JUBILEE...

With a star-studded pop concert near the Queen Victoria Memorial in front of Buckingham Palace. The queen will be serenaded by Paul McCartney, Elton John, Annie Lennox, Tom Jones, Madness and other international musical artists. (June 4)

With a two-hour boat ride back in time on the River Thames. Enjoy afternoon tea, finger sandwiches and champagne on a vintage boat, the *London Eye Barracuda*, cruising to the tunes of The Andrews Sisters, Anne Shelton and Vera Lynn. (June 4) londoneye.com



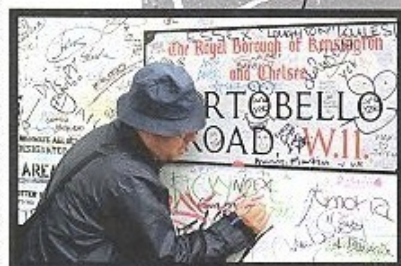
Chalk Farm Tube Station:
The wall opposite this station in North London was once home to a Banksy.

The Outsiders:
Banksy's agent/
gallerist Steve
Lazarides sells
street-inspired art
here, at 8 Greek
Street in Soho.



Curtain Road:
Find the [legal,
ephemeral]
work of graffiti
artists along
this road in
Shoreditch.

**The Westway and
Ladbroke Grove:**
The wall at this inter-
section in Notting
Hill is a good place to
find legal street art.



**Portobello
Wall:** The wall
at Portobello
Road, between
Cambridge
Gardens and
Golborne Road,
also sometimes
features legal
street art.



**Village
Underground:**
The art studios
and collective at
54 Holywell Lane
in Shoreditch
regularly feature
legal street art.



Leake Street: The tunnel next
to Waterloo Station was the
location of Banksy's 2008
street art festival.

THE CITYWIDE ART GALLERY

The story of Banksy's rise in the art world is like a street art fairytale. The anonymous bloke from Bristol gained international fame and art world accolades, ultimately seeing his work sell at Christie's for more than \$200,000. London has been home to many of his famous pieces. But these days, it's not out of the question to see entire public walls of Banksies disassembled and removed due to their value. Who will be the next Banksy? There's a whole brigade of spray-can-wielding street creators making their mark on the walls of London. But the beauty and nature of the work is that it's here today and gone tomorrow. This citywide trail will lead you through some of the spots more likely to host street art. Who knows what serendipitous open-air masterpieces await.



For a guide to
the latest murals
to grace London's
public walls, check out
streetartlondon.co.uk.
They'll even take you on
a private tour.



EDWARD BARBER & JAY OSGERBY

TASTEFUL TORCHBEARERS

For many athletes, making it to the Olympics is a lifelong dream. But there is a similarly lofty ambition among designers: to create the object that symbolizes the games, the Olympic torch. Edward Barber and Jay Osgerby, a design duo based in London's trendy Shoreditch, were awarded the London 2012 Olympic Torch commission.

Looking back, Osgerby vividly recalls when he first knew he wanted to design the torch. It was 1992, and design luminary Philippe Starck had been commissioned to fashion the Olympic object. "I thought, one day I'd love to do that!" This was around the time he and Barber met at The Royal College of Art in London, just four years before the formation of their company. Twenty years later, the result of that original dream is a torch with a strong narrative—a sleek, lightweight aluminum alloy piece with 8,000 perforated holes representing the 8,000 torchbearers running the relay. "The torch was designed to look like a piece of sporting equipment rather than a trophy," Barber says. Its trilateral form refers to the three times that Britain has hosted the Olympic Games (1908, 1948, 2012), and to the Olympic trifold motto: "Faster, higher, stronger."

Barber and Osgerby have adhered to that slogan themselves through the years, molding their company into an award-winning, innovative architecture and design studio commissioned by Sony, Levi's and BlackBerry. "London has been at the forefront of industrial design since the mid-1800s," Barber says, "when projects like the world's first underground transport system were being developed." The city is still just as exciting and innovative today, he says, thanks to initiatives such as the Crossrail, a high-speed subterranean rail link that will connect East and West London by 2018.

In a similar vein, Osgerby finds inspiration in the city's different niches: "London is so incredibly diversified and steeped in history, from where Henry VIII was born to where 400-year-old chestnut trees were planted by Charles II in Greenwich." Perhaps the most telling and design-related milieu, he says, are London's flea markets, where objects serendipitously meet their intended owners. "You can really judge a culture by its ephemera."



BRETT GRAHAM

THE ACCIDENTAL BRIT

Twelve years in London seem to have left their mark on celebrated Australian chef Brett Graham's culinary stylings. His Michelin-starred Fulham gastropub, The Harwood Arms, is so intent on delivering on its promise of serving the finest British country produce that it doesn't even serve chocolate. "Because it's not English," says Graham, who co-owns

The Harwood Arms with Mike Robinson. At his Michelin two-star Notting Hill restaurant, The Ledbury, the British tea ritual is infused with now-life in white asparagus with duck ham and morels cooked in Earl Grey tea and Parmesan.

The laid-back 33-year-old chef first moved to London from Newcastle, Australia, in 2000, with moderate culinary experience, and he swiftly moved up the ranks. He worked for about three years at another Michelin two-star restaurant, Mayfair's The Square, under the tutelage of chef Phil Howard. By 2005, just shy of 26, he had his own restaurant, The Ledbury, which specializes in modern European cuisine with classical roots.

Despite Graham's immense talent, he admits that London played a factor in his rapid ascent. "So many people come through London and live here. If you do a good job here, you can get recognized more quickly than if you weren't in London," he says, adding (only half-jokingly) that, "you can also go out of business just as quickly."

In contrast to the fast metropolitan pace, Graham finds some much-needed downtime at home in the leafy Richmond area of South West London, as well as beyond the city. "I do love the English countryside," he says, adding that he's picked up on a local tradition during his time in Britain: game shooting in Berkshire and Hampshire. "We have incredible deer in Britain. I cook with five different varieties of venison." Although he admittedly doesn't shoot often enough to fully and regularly stock his restaurants with the meat, he certainly goes further than most urban chefs in personally adhering to the philosophy of farm to table. harwoodarms.com, theledbury.com