



PUBSPY The White Hart, Crystal Palace

"It's a bit pricey, it's £4.30 for a pint of cider, but it keeps the riff-raff out," that's not my thoughts on The White Hart, but those of a man who attempted to befriend me as I sat nursing my drink.

Positioned prominently on the corner, the White Hart's black fascia and large deer stencil on the outside were bold and the spattering of well-groomed people drinking outside were a decent advert.

Fairy lights, chalkboards and an open kitchen with a busy chef all made the inside inviting while the White Hart. The acoustic, jazzy music over the sound system made it feel a bit like Later with Jools Holland.

Now we get to the really impressive bit: there were more beers on tap than I could count. And I can count to more than seven.

By and large, they were all exciting and different with the more standard end of the range being the excellent Meantime London Lager, Camden Hells and Brewdog.

Spurning the cosier red sofas at the back, I sat myself alone on a table with a flower on it, by the fireplace under a cardboard

cut-out of a stag's head. It was here I made my new friend.

It took me a little by surprise, but if you can't chat to a stranger in a pub, when can you?

I'll admit I was disconcerted at first when he started to tell me about his cash point woes. My plan to nod along and not engage was torpedoed when he started to fire questions at me.

What do you do? I couldn't ignore the guy. So, slowly, he tempted me into some banal conversation and I'm glad he did.

The world's too miserable a place not to make idle chit chat. Sometimes we forget that – and if I hadn't been to the White Hart maybe my day would have been just a little bit, almost inconceivably worse.

So, go to the White Hart. Talk to strangers at pubs. Maybe even combine the two.

The White Hart, Church Road, Crystal Palace

DECOR: ***** Impressive

ATMOSPHERE: *****

Friendly

STAFF: ***** Helpful

DRINK: ***** Amazing

PRICE: ***** Steep-ish

Vibe

Drink to Summer



Summer is Sangria time. If you've been to Spain for your holidays then you might be suffering withdrawal symptoms for that delicious blood-red fruit punch that is served in every Spanish bar and restaurant.

Angelo Gobbi, beverage manager and cocktail master at the Garden Restaurant at The Bromley Court Hotel shared his recipe.

Chef's tip one: Make it 24 hours before you want to drink it to allow the fruit to flavour and sweeten the wine.

Chef's tip two: You can add a host of other spirits to create your own Sangria recipe – try adding a splash of mandarin or raspberry vodka, crème de cassis, or any orange liqueur. Add more sugar if you prefer it sweeter.

Chef's tip three: Make a non-alcoholic version for the kids (or the drivers) by using a non-alcoholic red wine, adding a splash of orange syrup, and topping with lemonade.

● **Angelo Gobbi is a whiskey sommelier and will be hosting a unique whiskey and cheese pairing evening on Saturday, November 7 at The Bromley Court Hotel**



Bandicoot

Fantastic four

An alternative band from north Kent and Surrey is reaching new heights having secured a record deal, writes *Morgan Blanks*.

Bandicoot – made up of Simon Briley from Addington, Anthony Grant and Harvey Nowers from Kensing, Matt Chesson from Borough Green and Lewis Osment from north London – are releasing their debut single *The Lake* soon.

The band recently signed to Sevenoaks-based label Blizzard Records. For more information visit facebook.com/wearebandicoot

The Garden SANGRIA Makes 2 litres

Ingredients: 1 litre of red wine – choose a Spanish wine like a Tempranillo or a light Rioja, but you can also use a Shiraz or Merlot; 2 red apples – cored, but not peeled; 1 large orange; 2 peaches; 2 lemons; 2 cinnamon sticks; 4 cloves; 120g sugar; 60ml orange liqueur

Method: Cut all the fruit into large chunks or slices – discarding any stones. Take two one-litre carafes or large jugs and divide the fruit and sugar between them. Place a cinnamon stick, two cloves, and 30ml orange liqueur into each jug and pour over the wine. Give it a good stir and cover with cling film. Place in the fridge for 24 hours.

To serve: Add ice to tumblers and pour over the Sangria, using a wooden spoon to hold back the fruit and spices. Or pour the Sangria through a fine sieve if you prefer. Add a few pieces of fruit to the final drink. It can be drunk as it is or topped up with lemonade.

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COMPETITION

Win the ultimate family day out at the O2 including Little Mix tickets

To celebrate the last of the summer season, the O2 has teamed up with the News Shopper to give one lucky reader the chance to win the ultimate family day out at the world's most popular music and entertainment venue.

The whole family will be treated to a variety of brilliant prizes, including tickets to Elvis at the O2 exhibition, the chance to climb up the O2, bowling at the iconic Brooklyn Bowl, dinner at one of the O2's 24 restaurants or bars and even a cruise on the MBNA Thames Clippers.

If that was not enough, we are also throwing in a pair of tickets to watch Little Mix, who will be playing live at the O2 in March next year.

The O2 provides a whole host of family-friendly fun under one roof, making it the perfect family destination for a day out.

Enter our competition, and you could win all of these following prizes:

- Two tickets to see Little Mix live in March 2016,
- Four tickets to visit Elvis: the Exhibition of His Life, anytime



- until January 2016,
- Two hours' play at Brooklyn Bowl,
- A £100 voucher to use at a restaurant of your choice, and
- Four tickets to ride the MBNA Thames Clippers.

For more information visit theo2.com and share your photos with @TheO2 using #Family-AtTheO2.

For your chance to win a great family day out at the O2 simply answer the following question:

Where is the O2 based?

- A) Woolwich,
- B) North Greenwich,
- C) Stratford.

Send your text to 80360 starting with FAMILY leave a space, followed by your answer, name and contact details.

Alternatively, send your answer on a postcard with your name, address and telephone number to: O2 competition, News Shopper, Floor 10, Quadrant House, The Quadrant, Sutton SM2 5AS.

Terms & conditions: Texts cost 50p plus your normal operator text charge. Text lines open August 19 and close August 30 at midnight. Call 020 7998 0549 for help and advice on phone and mobile services. One winner will receive: ● Two tickets to see Little Mix live in March 2016. ● Four tickets to visit Elvis: the Exhibition of His Life, valid anytime until January 2016. ● Four tickets to Climb Up at the O2, valid for 12 months. ● Two hours' play at Brooklyn Bowl, valid for 12 months, cannot be redeemed on event days. ● £100 voucher to use at a restaurant of your choice, valid for 12 months, alcohol not included, tables cannot be reserved. ● Four tickets to ride the MBNA Thames Clippers, valid for 12 months, cannot be used during Tube strike days. For full terms visit newsquest.co.uk/terms.