

Alex Bourke samples Britain's greatest concentration of vegan eateries in East London hipster heaven.

SHOREDITCH

Move over Soho, the capital's hippest young women and bearded guys are flocking to Shoreditch. Stretching east from Silicon Roundabout to Brick Lane, through the clubs and pubs of Old Street and Curtain Road, it's the new mecca for social media jobs, independent cinemas, cutting-edge vegan diners from raw to kebabs, fashion boutiques from vintage to indie designers, and gigantic weekend clothes and food markets. Meet friends or family for a fun Sunday roaming the markets, seek out incredible street art, and feast at a dozen vegan pop-up food stalls.

What the Pitta, on Shoreditch High Street, is London's first vegan kebab shop. Colossal doners (£7.50) come either in a wrap or as a salad box on couscous, packed with soya



chunks, hummus, tzatziki, salad and chilli. For dessert you can have baklava or sometimes chocolate cake. Best bet is the £10 meal deal: kebab, dessert and a drink. If it's chilly, grab coffee or mint tea from the falafel stall behind them.

Next to Shoreditch High Street station is the Boxpark, a fashion and food mall in black shipping containers open late every night. London veggies relish **Cook Daily's** Chinese and Thai vegan dishes. Tuck in to fake chicken and veg stir-fry, spiced chickpea and sweet potato curry with dhal and coconut milk, or veggies with yam, wholemeal dumplings, steamed plantain and ackee in thyme and pepper sauce.

Brick Lane's south end is the Bangladeshi curry mile, while further up are two unique and brand new vegan cafés, **Mooshies** and **Vida Bakery**, plus a weekend wonderland of street food in the Boiler House food hall and covered Upmarket. The many vegan stalls include **Benny Buttons** pancakes, **Pine's Food**

Also recommended...

- Eat clean at **Redemption** vegan and raw restaurant and mocktail bar on Old Street. Try sweetcorn and red pepper pancakes, coconut cheesecake, or afternoon tea and cake.
- Past Columbia Road Sunday flower market are vegan **Friendship Shoes** and **Just Fab**, a fun vegan Italian restaurant in a big red bus.
- The Sunday Spitalfields market features falafel cafés and vegan food stalls by Ethiopian **Merkamo** and



wraps and salads, **Ethiopiques** colourful Ethiopian stews and salads with injera bread, **Organic Livity** cakes, and **Pomodoro e Basilico** Italian pizza slices, cheese fingers, burgers, 'Twix' bars, matcha Oreos and cookies. End the day with vegan craft beers at **Brewdog**.



Caribbean raw maestros **Rainforest Creations**.
 ● Stroll up Hoxton Street to **Trew Era**, Russell Brand's chilled out veggie café near the canal. Over the bridge is the elegant Pamela cocktail bar with spicy vegan catering by **Club Mexicana**.

NEED TO KNOW

What the Pitta

Facebook: What the Pitta

Cook Daily

www.cookdaily.co.uk

Mooshies

www.veganburger.org

Vida Bakery

Facebook: Vida Bakery

Brick Lane stalls

Facebook: Benny Buttons Tea

www.organiclivityco.com

www.facebook.com/Pines-foods-877623232258866

Facebook: Pomo Basilico

Brewdog

www.brewdog.com

Redemption

www.redemptionbar.co.uk

Friendship Shoes

www.friendship.shoes

Just Fab

www.just-fab.london

Spitalfields stalls

Facebook: Merkamo London

www.rainforestcreations.co.uk

Trew Era

Facebook: Trew Era Café

Club Mexicana

www.clubmexicana.com

ABOUT ALEX

Look out for Alex Bourke's new guide to vegan London coming soon. Find out more at www.veganlondon.guide.