

## Side orders

### Shelf life



ROB GREIG

#### Seoul Bakery

Extravagantly decorated celebration cakes and retro-chic signage tempt people walking around Centrepoin to this unusual Korean bakery. Inside are shelves of intriguing pastries, most of which are made in the open kitchen at the back of the store – where the baker works in full view of customers.

Grab one of the little paper-lined baskets and a pair of metal tongs and get choosing. A few of the goodies – doughnuts, cream-filled profiteroles, madeleines – will be reassuringly familiar, while others, such as horseshoe-shaped layers of pastry and chocolate-nut paste, or a high-rise pie secreting creamy red beans, will not.

How do Korean pastries differ from those of Europe? In some cases, remarkably little, but you'll find many items on sale here are not as sweet as you may be used to. *Jenni Muir*

*Seoul Bakery, 55 St Giles High St, WC2H 8LH (020 7240 6664) Tottenham Court Rd tube. Open Mon-Sat 11am-11pm.*

### Supermarket news

#### Polish foods go large

Hot on the heels of our feature highlighting the growth of the Polish food scene in London (TO 1905), Morrison's supermarkets are expanding their range of Polish groceries to 55 items. Poppyseed and rye breads baked by a traditional Polish bakery, Krakus red cabbage, kabanos sausage and Sliwka Naleczowska chocolate-coated plums are among the authentic products being sold in response to the estimated 600,000 Poles now living in Britain. The company has more than 15 branches in the greater London area. ([www.morrisons.co.uk](http://www.morrisons.co.uk))

### Event

#### Selfridges' surrealist celebration

Alice in Wonderland and Salvador Dali have inspired Choccywoccydoodah's collection for Selfridges' surrealist season running until June 24. In the confectionery department you'll be able to buy giant chocolate lollipops (£14.99) in the shape of lips and view a giant cake featuring the Queen of Hearts and Cheshire Cat. Downstairs, Les Trois Garçons (who run the restaurant of the same name in E1) are transforming the basement Sienna Café into a surrealist tea shop.

*Selfridges, 400 Oxford St, W1A 1AB (08708 377 377) Bond St tube.*

## Michelin men

**Guy Dimond** grills Jean-Luc Naret, director of Michelin Guides (worldwide), and Derek Bulmer, editor of Michelin Guides (UK), on how London ranks in the international pantheon of restaurant cities

#### GD Jean-Luc, what do you think are the differences specifically between Paris, New York and London?

**J-L N** The main difference would be diversity. The diversity of food doesn't exist in France; 99 per cent of the restaurants in our Paris guide will be French. In both London and New York there are about 50 types of different cuisine. The diversity of culinary experience is exactly the same in New York as it is in London and when you count the number of Michelin stars – 39 for New York, 43 for London – it really proves that these cities are comparable. France is more about traditional French food.

**GD London is not an English city, it's an international city in the same way that New York is. But which do you think is better for food? Is it New York still? Or is it now London, as some people think?**



ROB GREIG

**J-L N** London and New York are really competing against each other in that regard. From the Michelin point of view, we have listed 526 restaurants this year in New York, with 39 stars. Here in London you have 428 restaurants with 43 stars. So the winner, from our point of view, is London.

#### GD That's judging from the criterion of stars, awarded to a particular type of haute cuisine restaurant; but are people who want pub-style food or fast food better off in London, Paris, or somewhere else?

**J-L N** The main difference is that London is more expensive.

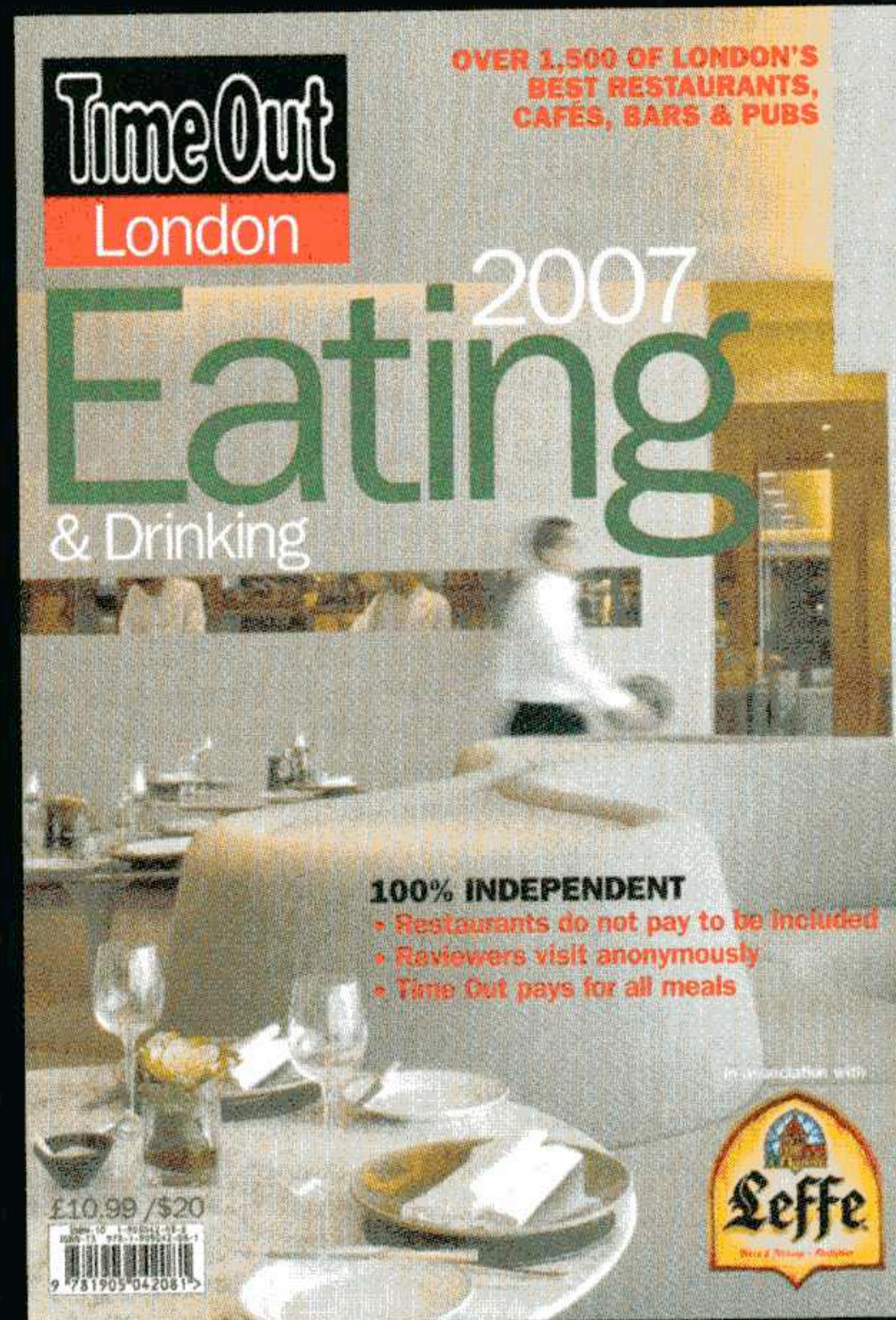
**DB** Yes, London is probably the most expensive capital city that we do a guide in.

#### GD Is there still a huge gulf between eating out in London and the rest of the UK?

**DB** Because of the importance of the city, the size of its population and the amount of money spent, we do find that there is a huge concentration of the best restaurants in London. There's not a gulf in quality, but there's a gulf in quantity, and we would like more spread out all over the place rather than being concentrated in one place. The good country restaurants are obviously just as good as London restaurants – it's just there aren't so many of them.

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