

# Food & Drink

Time Out reviews  
anonymously and  
pays for meals

London tried and tasted every week Edited by Guy Dimond



**Tradish and chips** Geales drags modern dining back to the '70s (in a good way...)

## Reviews

### Geales

★★★★★

#### Chelsea fish restaurant

Fish restaurants these days should heed the 'S' word – sustainability. A few check the sustainable credentials of their fish, but a great many still don't. And a few have made a special effort to stock only sustainable fish, but have yet to be rewarded with droves of environmentally aware customers.

One of the first sustainable fish restaurants, Deep, in Chelsea Harbour, closed recently due to lack of interest. In 2008 Tom's Place in Chelsea tried the same thing, but even a chef as high-profile as Tom Aikens couldn't make it work – that too had to close.

Undeterred by that failure on a seemingly well-placed Chelsea site, Geales fish restaurant has just opened its second branch on the site of Tom's Place, and are clearly hoping they can succeed where Aikens failed.

Geales does not shout its green

credentials. A small note on the menu states: 'All our fish come from sustainable sources,' and it's a member of the Sustainable Restaurant Association. So while not quite as heroic as Tom Aikens personally visiting

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every fisherman who supplied him, Geales is doing its bit.

The menu here appears comfortably old-fashioned, in the way of seaside towns, the Isle of Wight or David Cameron's belief in the imminent emergence of Big Society. Prawn

cocktail, served in a melba dish, sits alongside a few more daring touches such as wasabi peas, but mostly the menu proceeds as if the clock stopped around 1973 – but using better ingredients.

Deep-fried whitebait were a joy to pop in the mouth whole, heads and all, still piping hot from the fryer. A fishcake of smoked haddock and salmon came in a firm, fried carapace which prevented its creamy sauce from turning it soggy.

Deep-fried scampi is a dish you don't see much these days, tainted as it is by association with 1970s service-station food. But if Heston Blumenthal can reclaim Little Chef, then Geales (Notting Hill branch: est 1939) can reclaim *Nephrops norvegicus* from the arrivistes who call it 'langoustines' or 'Dublin Bay prawns'. And good scampi they are too, fresh, tender and not overcooked.

Desserts include sticky toffee pudding, strawberry trifle and even – a special on the board – chocolate éclair.

On our visit Geales was proving a big hit with the locals – in this part of Chelsea, even the hoodies speak with public school accents, and the street drinkers prefer Chablis to strong cider. If it's done its sums right and doesn't upset the neighbours with fish-frying fumes, this restaurant could prove to be more sustainable than its predecessor.

*Guy Dimond*  
Geales, 1 Cale St, SW3 3QT (7965 0555/[www.geales.com](http://www.geales.com)). Sloane Square tube. 6-10.30pm Mon; noon-2.30pm, 6-10.30pm Tue-Fri; noon-10.30pm Sat; noon-9.30pm Sun. Meal for two with wine and service: around £75. Set lunch £9.95 (two courses, Tue-Fri).

#### THE BILL

Food	£37.45
Drinks	£17.20
12.5 per cent service charge	£6.83
<b>Total</b>	<b>£61.48</b>