

LONDON'S BEST BITS



By **Liz Tray**
Who prefers to watch the
Gunners from the away end.



IF YOU ONLY DO ONE THING...

Visit **Platform**, a council-funded arts hub that matches young people with industry pros. Once Hornsey Road Baths, it's now a venue for dance, theatre, film screenings and workshops.

Hornsey Road Holloway, N7 and N19

→ Holloway Rd. Crouch Hill Overground.

I KNOW WHAT you're thinking. Of all the verdant, historic and on-trend locales in London, why write about Hornsey Road, best known as the artery that connects the hulking Emirates Stadium to bougie Crouch End? Well, for one thing, this is still London – where practically every building houses something worth speaking up for. And anyone who's ever been in the area on match day, with people spilling out of pubs and grabbing pre-match bites, can attest to its buzzing atmosphere.

This is an earthy, vibrant bit of the city, with plenty going for it from top (where it emerges from Crouch End Hill and Hornsey Rise) to bottom (where it crosses Seven Sisters Road before meeting Holloway Road near the stadium). Once the road from London to Hornsey – the former Saxon settlement between what's now Crouch End and Alexandra Park – Hornsey Road is a tad overshadowed by its parallel neighbour Holloway Road. But that's an injustice that needs righting. So prepare to get familiar with some down-to-earth N7 pleasures: meeting an Arsenal legend, scarfing down excellent fare, handing a bundle of cash over for that drum machine you've always wanted and raising a glass to football on a big-screen telly – before seeing red at an obviously wrong penalty decision.

Kitfo, a traditional lean beef dish, with injera flatbread at **Wolkite** – a buzzing Ethiopian eatery.

A burger with truffle fries in brunch heaven **Kitchen @ 149**.

Do this

Work up a sweat in the boxing gym or take a glide around the ice rink at the **Sobell Leisure Centre**.

Get your old Thierry shirt framed at the indie, fan-run **Match Day** shop opposite the stadium.

Engage with your mindful chi, man, in a hatha yoga class at **The Factory**.

Go for a snoop around the **Emirates Stadium**. Take in the trophy room, recently laden with FA Cups, or book a 'legends tour' and get shown around by a real Gooner hero.

Buy this

A gorgeous looking-glass for your living room at the super-niche (it only sells mirrors) **Bale & Hare**.

An actual piano – or you can rent one, if you want to be Elton for just a night – from **London Pianos**.

Some dazzlingly nerdy vintage audio gear for your home studio from the awesome experts at **Funky Junk**. Don't mind the Dalek at the door.

A quality pre-loved Fender from **Bobby Joe's Music**, the kind of great local guitar shop that's getting rarer and rarer in London these days.

Something permanent at **Through My Third Eye**, a high-end tattooist. From geometrics to intricate portraits, they can do it all. ■

Drink this

London-brewed pale ale at proper local **The Shaftesbury Tavern**.

A pre-match pint at the **Tollington Arms** – and I'd leave that Spurs shirt in the wardrobe, if I were you.

Eat this

Yen tah foh, a delicious pink rice-noodle dish with perfectly crispy wonton, at Thai spot **Rusty Bike**.

Eggs florentine at **The Front Room Café**, nearby on Tollington Park.

Biangbiang noodles in a special chilli sauce at **Xi'an Impression**, a top Chinese place on Benwell Road by the stadium.



Xi'an Impression

NEON SIGN: MORAG MYERSCOUGH; XI'AN IMPRESSION: BRITTA JASCHINSKI

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