

BEST SPANISH

Ingredients for success

First-rate Iberian produce at **Camino** (see p260), **Dehesa** (see p261), **L Restaurant** (see p262), **Salt Yard** (see right) and **Tapas Brindisa** (see p265).

Tip-top tapas

Sublime snacks at **Barrafina** (see p261), **El Parador** (see p267), **Orford Saloon** (see p267), **Tapas Brindisa** (see p265), **Tapas y Vino** (see p267) and **Tendido Cero** (see p262).

Beyond the boundaries

Influences stray over national frontiers to North Africa at **Moro** (see right) and to Italy at **Salt Yard** (see right) and **Dehesa** (see p261).

Bars for the buzz

Sink the sangría with the lively crowds at **Camino** (see p260), **Mar i Terra** (see p265), **Meza** (see p261), **Olé** (see p263), and **Pinchito Tapas** (see p266).

2009 TIME OUT | EATING & DRINKING



Kensington

★ L Restaurant & Bar

2 Abingdon Road, W8 6AF (7795 6969/www.l-restaurant.co.uk). High Street Kensington tube. Lunch served noon-2.30pm Tue-Sat. Dinner served 6-10.30pm Mon-Sat. Meals/tapas served 12.30-8.30pm Sun. Main courses £9.50-£17.50. Tapas £3.25-£4.95. Credit AmEx, MC, V.

We awarded L Restaurant a red star in its debut year, and 12 months later, we're just as impressed. The venue is curious. The main restaurant (reached via a compact bar at the front) occupies a long, thin, back-yardish area, but the use of space is intelligent. A glass roof floods it with light. Some diners like sitting on the mezzanine level, but we much prefer to be downstairs where it feels a little less cramped. Service is professional and sophisticated, perfectly complementing the top-notch modern Iberian cooking. Food consists of generally unfussy combinations of first-rate, super-fresh ingredients cooked with precision and passion. Every dish on our latest visit was fantastic. To start: a big slab of roast butternut squash with cubes of pancetta and salad; and seared scallops with chunks of chorizo. Next came slices of sublimely juicy suckling lamb on a bed of tomato and butter beans; and magnificent cubes of monkfish atop a pile of herb-enriched lentils. The house red wine was great value too. L Restaurant isn't a budget eatery, but it's one of the best bargains in town. *Babies and children admitted. Booking advisable. Separate room for parties, seats 14. Tables outdoors (2, pavement).*



L Restaurant. See p262.