

Hixter Bankside is not  
Mark Hix's first foray  
south of the river



# MEAT FEAST

*The future of casual dining is sharing, says Mark Hix, as he delivers his successful steak and chicken dining concept, Hixter, south of the river*

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**A** stylish new addition to south London's vibrant restaurant scene has just opened its doors to a ravenous public. Mark Hix, multi award-winning chef and food writer and one of London's most acclaimed restaurateurs, has delivered his successful steak and chicken dining concept to south east London with Hixter Bankside. The move southwards is deliberate, Mark

explains: 'The restaurants that we're opening need to be well spread around London. We haven't got one south of the river yet. With the food scene, the centre of London is expanding. Wherever you are out of the centre is a good thing.'

And south of the river is where it's at right now: 'That part of London is being developed. Even standing on the other side of the river and looking

across, there's lots going on. London's utilising areas that maybe were once industrial and are now being used for flats and houses and offices,' he says. All of which makes opening up a restaurant there an exciting challenge; for Mark, Hixter Bankside is part of 'being able to offer a food concept in different residential and business areas.'

But this isn't really Mark's only foray into south London – seven years

Check out the extensive cocktail list at Hixter Bankside's basement bar



Share a whole roast chicken with friends



*Hixter forms a more relaxed kind of dining and I think some dishes should be shared*

'I work with artists in all sorts of areas,' says Mark. 'I've always done it really. It's part of the look of the restaurants. Artists will make work for me according to what they think is right for the building. They add aesthetics to the room. They can change the look of a room completely.'

The restaurant, where diners can feast on a whole roast chicken or Himalayan salt-cured steaks of 250g and 500g, puts the communal ethos centre-stage. For Mark, sharing a meal with friends makes 'casual' the order



Hixter serves several different cuts of beef designed for sharing

of the day, something that's bound to go down well with south Londoners: 'It forms a more relaxed kind of dining and I think some dishes should be shared. Sometimes you get a restaurant where you order three different things that aren't appropriate to share. At Hixter, if there are six of you, you can order a chicken and a kilo of meat.'

While the main courses consist of variations on the same theme – 'We have a roast chicken, chicken curry, a chicken burger and chicken salad; likewise with the beef we have several different cuts of meat on and off the bone' – veggies are catered for too, depending on what's in season. If it's drinks you're after, look no further: beneath the vast glass-fronted kitchen and two dining rooms lies Mark's, a basement bar serving an extensive list of cocktails featuring new and established British drinks producers.

So who's he hoping to attract? 'All sorts. What we're trying to do at the restaurant is to have a good mix of customers in there – from students to businessmen – I think you need to keep the menu accessible to all.'

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ago, he was involved with the Rivington Grill in Greenwich when he was chef director of restaurant group Caprice Holdings. And, since opening his first restaurant, Hix Oyster and Chop House in Smithfield back in 2008, he has gone from strength to strength, establishing a further six, including the Tramshed in Shoreditch, on which Hixter Bankside is based.

The new venue – set in a converted Victorian metal factory – lends itself well to the commissioned artworks that have become a signature feature of his restaurants, making its location a stone's throw away from the Tate Modern particularly apt. Apart from neon signage designed by the art world's enfant terrible Tracey Emin, works include key pieces by Rob and Nicky Carter, Peter Newman, Tim Noble and Sue Webster and Gavin Turk.