

# LONDON'S BEST BITS



By Ellie Broughton  
Who's baa-rmy about  
Bloomsbury.



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## Lamb's Conduit Street Bloomsbury, WC1

→ ⇨ Russell Square.

**LAMB'S CONDUIT STREET:** what a weird name. This partly pedestrianised stretch of Bloomsbury has nothing to do with actual lambs – in fact, it's named after a wealthy Tudor dude called William Lambe. He built a conduit, or pipe, here to supply the City with spring water, which was rebuilt by Christopher Wren after being damaged in the Great Fire of London. The street became fashionable in the nineteenth century, when Charles Dickens was a local.

So it's one of London's more historic bits, evidenced most clearly by two Victorian pubs: The Lamb and The Perseverance, both pulling pints to this day. The Lamb still has 'snob screens': frosted glass partitions at eye-height so prudish middle-class drinkers could get a bit of privacy.

One of the main things that sets Lamb's Conduit Street apart is its dearth of chains. There was once a Starbucks here, but local businesses fought tooth-and-nail to keep the street independent, and that spirit has allowed an innovative food co-operative and a whole strip of luxury clothes shops to take root. The result: a perfect place to retire after a trip to the British Museum, and an excellent alternative to the West End for after-work drinks. Come for the snob screens, stay for the old London atmosphere. ■

Bibimbap, kimchi and pancakes, served 'til 1am at **Hoji**.

Fresh ciabatta sandwiches packed with parma ham and rocket at the deli counter of **La Gourmandina**.

Fresh spaghetti dishes and homemade tiramisu at long-standing family-run Italian **Ciao Bella**.

## Buy this

Food and groceries from independent farms and producers at friendly and creative co-op **The People's Supermarket**.

Luxury-casual mens and womenswear (expensive and expensive-looking) at **Folk**.

Fine wines, interesting new gins and fancy antipasti at **Albion Wine Shippers**.

Perfect presents and fancy, designed stationery to tart up your pencil case at **Volte Face**, round the corner on Great Ormond Street.

British design classics and menswear (including Satta and Barbour collabs) at **Universal Works**.

Prints from illustrators old and new at **Pentreath & Hall**, a few steps away on Rugby Street.

## Do this

Got a small person? Then you can enjoy **Coram's Fields**: the only adults allowed are chaperones.

Get your nails or spray tan done at indie spa **The Beauty Therapy Room**.

Charles Dickens had his most productive period in a house very close by on Doughty Street. It's now **The Dickens Museum**. ■

## Drink this

Wine by the glass or bottle from a studiously selected list at **Noble Rot**.

London gin behind the snob screens at **The Lamb**, a treasure of a pub, where Dickens drank.

Pints of Bloomsbury ale, brewed on-site, at the street's other surviving Victorian pub: **The Perseverance**.

## Eat this

Sourdough toasties and epic meringues at minimal modern coffee shop **Knockbox Coffee**.

Tapas and paella at **Cigala**, set up by a co-founder of Moro. Also a good shout for sherries.



Noble Rot