

# Food

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## Boxing clever

Boxpark Croydon is here at last – and it's a shipping container paradise, says *Laura Price*

### What is it?

An all-day, seven-days-a-week food court with a huge events space, inside a complex of 80 shipping containers.

### What's the vibe

It's bigger – much bigger – than its Shoreditch sibling, with a supersized dining area, but its best asset is the warm community feel. Music helps that vibe – we wouldn't expect anything less from the town that gave us the BRIT School (esteemed alumni include Amy Winehouse and Adele). There's free live music on Thursdays and

Sundays, and resident DJs on Fridays and Saturdays – but you'll need to register for tickets. Check online for details of the full events schedule.

### Top tip: it's great for breakfast on the go

If you work or live locally and are the kind of person that likes to have a proper warm-the-cockles brekkie, it's well worth dropping in first thing in the morning. Most of Boxpark's vendors are raring to go by 8am and breakfast specials abound – £2 baps at Bukowski Grill, pastries and artisan coffee at Mud and ample takeaway

options at The Breakfast Club. No more soggy cornflakes at home.

### What to eat and drink

There are not just one, but *three* independent coffee shops here, along with a host of other punnily named eateries from Soho, Shoreditch and Brixton. It's a shame there aren't more Croydon originals here, but the bar (read: the rent) is pretty high for new entries – a fact reflected in the prices. But it's a minor gripe. There's still some major humdingers at Boxpark, so after eating our way around the space, here are the best dishes, ranked.



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MANFREDI GWILLE

### 7 Lamington at Department of Coffee and Social Affairs, £3

An excellent rendition of the iconic cube-shaped Aussie sponge cakes (also coated in chocolate and desiccated coconut). Goes brilliantly with a flat white, too.

### 6 K-wings at Coqfighter, five pieces, £6

Twice-fried, vodka- and sesame-battered Korean-style wings, which even comes with a handy little paint brush for the DIY application of a lick of hot sauce or sweet soy glaze.

### 5 Jerk chicken at Fish, Wings & Tings, £10

Sticky-sweet jerked chicken pieces in a hearty bowl of rice and beans, all the way from Brixton. Go easy on the Super Jerkily Pepper Sauce – it looks harmless enough but has some serious kick.

### 4 Wild mushrooms on sourdough at Mud, £9.80

A punchy, pesto-packed plate of mixed wild mushrooms, sausages, poached Cotswold Legbar eggs and red onion jam. Wash it all down with a cup of artisan coffee.



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### 3 Pho bo tai at Bang Bang Hawker, £9.50

Vietnamese hawker-style pho with rare beef sirloin and flat rice noodles in an 18-hour bone marrow broth – fresh, flavoursome and a healthy alternative to Boxpark's many fast food joints.

### 2 Sweet potato, tomato, mozzarella and pesto at The Potato Project, £5.75

The jacket spud gets a healthy, twenty-first-century makeover. Just like the pre-Pret era, minus the polystyrene boxes, tiny wooden forks and post-lunch food comas.

### 1 Chickpea roti at Nanny Outars, £6

Say yes to all the trimmings on this Guyanese wrap – jerk-pickled cucumber, coconut yoghurt and Nanny's Ball o' Fire chilli sauce. Outars also wins the prize for friendliest staff. ■  
→ 99 George St, CR0 1LD. 3889 7739. East Croydon rail. Free entry.



By **Laura Price**  
Who left Yorkshire in favour of the Cronx.