

# Victoria to become an eating-out hub

*Big name chefs and restaurateurs to make the Westminster district a foodie hot spot*

London's Victoria district is set to become the capital's next major eating-out hub, with about 20 top restaurateurs and operators being attracted to the area.

Property development giant Land Securities has invested £2bn into building a number of new developments in the area, including 62 Buckingham Gate, Kings Gate, The Zig Zag Building and Nova, Victoria.

Slated to open in 2016, Nova, Victoria, will be home to venues from high-calibre operators including Jason Atherton, D&D London, Will Ricker and Bone Daddies' Ross Shonhan. Atherton is to unveil a casual Italian restaurant, D&D will launch a 10,000sq ft café, bar and food shop and Shonhan is to open a fourth Bone Daddies ramen restaurant.

"Ten years ago, Victoria was not a part of central London in which we were keen to open restaurants - but this has changed," says D&D chairman and chief executive Des Gunewardena. "Victoria is becoming one of the most desirable parts of central London to live, work and eat out, and we are keen to be part of that scene, typified by Nova."

Adam White, co-founder of Village London - which owns London restaurants and pubs The Garrison, Village East and Riding House Café - will develop a 150-cover all-day restaurant at Nova, Victoria, and Sourced Market will bring its blend of market retail and all-day dining there. Restaurateur Will Ricker will open two concepts at the development: The Stoke House will be a traditional American barbecue, while a second site of its The Juice Well will serve cold-pressed juice and superfood smoothies.

The Zig Zag Building, which is due to open



Downtown Victoria: the capital's next major dining hub

later this year, has signed up premium Spanish group Iberica and Martin Williams' recently launched M restaurant format.

Jamie's Italian is also set to open its flagship UK site in the area. The new restaurant, which will occupy the ground and first floors of Kings Gate, will feature a strong retail element as well as outside seating. It will open later at weekends to tap into Victoria's growing restaurant and bar culture.

Popular high street brands including Leon, Wagamama, La Tasca and Benugo have already set up shop in the area but the intention is for Victoria to rival other London foodie hubs such as Shoreditch and Soho. Victoria's weekly food

market at Cardinal Place has laid the foundations, with street food stalls such as Peruvian-focused Panka, Ethiopian trader Red Tent Ent and Mark Hix's FishDog having operated there.

The food offer in Victoria Station's Victoria Place shopping area has also been reinvigorated, with a number of fast-expanding, fast-casual and casual-dining brands taking space there. These include Ed's Easy Diner, Tortilla and The Fresh Pizza Co.

It is hoped that the multi-billion-pound project will deliver a 'downtown' area with a food and restaurant offering comparable to that of the recently redeveloped King's Cross in terms of scope and quality.

## Hélène Darroze eyes 'more casual' London venue

Hélène Darroze has revealed her desire to open a number of new restaurants in the coming years, including a more casual place in the capital.

In an exclusive interview, the French chef, who was officially crowned the Veuve Clicquot World's Best Female Chef this month, said she dreamt of having a more informal restaurant in London, to complement her two Michelin-starred eponymous fine-dining restaurant in the Connaught hotel, as well as one across The Pond.

"For the moment, I have two dreams," she said. "I would love to do something more casual in London, to give my interpretation of bistronomie, and secondly - something I've wanted for ever - to open a place in New York."

Both dreams are very much at the initial stages, but Darroze says she's taking steps to develop them. "I just came back from New York and it's incredible to see what's happening around French cuisine there at the moment.

"There are so many places opening in New York based on the French bistros and brasserie styles. Even the ones that open with an American

twist are completely inspired by French bistros or brasseries."

■ For the full interview, turn to page 62



Big dream: Hélène Darroze wants to open two new restaurants