

Lite bites

Food and drink news

The Place to be

● LAUNCESTON PLACE may be a Kensington institution, but a year after its takeover by D&D London, it still feels young at heart. First birthday celebrations kick off from 23-29 March and your table could win a bottle of champagne and a birthday cake. The restaurant's innovative chef Tristan Welch joins the BBC's Great British Menu this month, so check him out while his stock's on the up. **Launceston Place, 1a Launceston Place, W8, 020 7937 6912**

Ireland in Albion

● ISLINGTON boozier The Albion has a talented new Irish chef, Liam Kirwan, at the stove. What better time to dazzle us with his talent than St Patrick's Day? His menu for 17 March (£26) showcases flavours from the Emerald Isle in dishes such as Dublin coddle soup with wheaten croutons, salmon with colcannon salad and cockle butter, and a baby Guinness mousse. **The Albion, 10 Thornhill Road, N1, 020 7607 7450**

High tea for two

● TRENDY Kettner's in Soho has a new entry-level price point: £5 for a cuppa and a cake. The £5 tea, available daily from 2.30pm until 6pm, is a cool alternative to the ubiquitous coffee chains and gets you a proper pot of fresh leaf tea with delicious home-made cakes such as white chocolate brownie or Bakewell tart in the chic-on-a-shoestring surroundings of one of Soho's oldest restaurants. **Kettner's, 29 Romilly Street, W1, 020 7734 6112**

Sushi specials

● WE CAN now look forward to two new dates in the diary from Japan — White Day (14 March) and Black Day (14 April). Me Love Sushi in Swiss Cottage celebrates the former, when girls traditionally get treated, with free "Love" cocktails for the ladies and a 10 per cent discount for their fellas. Black Day brings treats for singletons, namely a free cocktail and two-for-one noodle dishes. **Me Love Sushi, 100 Avenue Road, NW3, 020 7483 0888**

HILARY ARMSTRONG