

LAND THAT PLUM ROLE: TURN TO OUR EPIC RECRUITMENT SECTION, P61

restaurant

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Living Room W1

Flagship branch opens in new London hotspot

While the newly opened Living Room W1 in Heddon Street is not London's first (there's already one in Islington), it is, they say, the brand's flagship. Significantly bigger than any of the other 12 Living Rooms owned by North-West-based Living Ventures, which also owns the Mosquito and Prohibition brands and is headed up by erstwhile Aussie soap star Tim Bacon. Living Room W1 takes up its position at the end of the street, tucked away behind Regent Street, which is

trying very hard to re-invent itself as a hip food and drink destination. Among the new neighbours in this small out-dé-sac are Momo, Zinc Bar and the recently opened Ice Bar.

Size aside, the site has its own claim to fame. If you pull out your copy of David Bowie's 1972 classic *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and The Spiders from Mars* you'll see that Bowie, dressed as Ziggy, is standing in front of the post office that formerly occupied the site. Now,

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First Class
On the site of a former Post Office, Living Room W1 aims to provide a 'home but not as you know it' environment



presumably, Living Ventures is hoping to attract hordes of the beautiful and wealthy in place of queues of pensioners. Perhaps Gloria Hunniford, spotted looking slightly conspicuous amongst the glamorous young clientele gathered to christen the new site and hear Supergrass play on the opening night, hadn't been informed of the site change.

The Living Room W1 is on two floors. The ground floor has a casual dining area with 72 covers and a lounge bar that holds 150, plus a grand piano. Upstairs is more formal, with all 88 tables set and a bar to serve diners only. There are also plans to open a basement club with a separate entrance in phase two of the construction.

Interior architect Shideh Shaygan was charged with the task of creating a "home but not as you know it" environment. On the ground floor, the back of the venue is framed by a 20m long, 7m high bar, while a "wall of fire" separates the dining area from the bar and a bespoke Georgian staircase winds down to the basement. Carpet adorns the walls with a blend of different fabrics and textures.

The menu is as expansive as the site. Open seven days a week, from morning until late, it offers a fixed-price lunch and pre/post-theatre menu, a children's menu, afternoon tea, a selection of small plates, salads, sandwiches and à la carte. Oh, and not forgetting brunch on Sundays. Cookery writer and broadcaster Hugo Arnold is consulting on the menu alongside Steve Collins, ex-Head Chef of Quaglinos, and group Executive Chef John Branagan. There's some decent vintage stuff on the wine list, as well as a monthly guest list of reds and whites available by the glass or bottle. **i**

WHERE? | The Living Room W1, 3-9 Heddon Street, London W1. 08701 662225, www.thelivingroom.co.uk