

# The Third Coming of St Angela

This week *Joseph Connolly* gives his verdict on Angela Hartnett's third venture, *Café Murano*, London WC2

And lo, it comes to pass: the Blessed St Angela of Hartnett is now thrice risen into the firmament of foodiness. That is to say, following on from the rather wonderful Murano in Mayfair, there came the diffusion line in the form of Café Murano in St James's, and now we have a brand spanking new outpost of the very same name, this one in Covent Garden. Hartnett is a fine chef who has come a very long way since she worked the kitchens for Gordon Ramsay; Aubergine, L'Oranger and then the York & Albany in Camden. This was a rather rickety sort of a place – nice bar, the upper eating area cramped in the way of a carriage on the Northern Line, unhappily teamed with the sticky echo of a Golden Egg of yore, while the lower floor was tricked out like a blood clot or dusty bordello designed by a blind man in the grip of self-loathing. Then Angela was at Petrus, this followed by the Connaught; I can only assume that she got fed up working with Gordon Ramsay, as who would not? I often get the feeling that even Gordon Ramsay must be fed up working with Gordon Ramsay, his once mighty empire slipping away from public awareness, as

he maybe glumly surveys the lukewarm puddle of nostalgia for all that once was... pausing only to be theatrically profane. Murano in Mayfair is an altogether splendid place – a dullish room, it is true, behind the most undistinguished frontage in London – but the tables are generously spaced, the service first rate and the food sometimes nudging the sublime. In St James's, meanwhile, was a restaurant called 33, one of the first to name the place after the number in the street, this soon leading to not just a contagion, but also a boiling rage upon the part of the consummately innumerate who could easily bowl up, hungry and bewildered, to 82 or 34 in completely different areas of London. I remember there was a front of house who, when you gave your name, said, "I will sort you out." He was not at all given to smiling. I traipsed behind him to my table in mortal silence: already too jangled for a starter – just gulping down the Dutch courage as only a true coward can. In time, this became Petrus, and then Café Murano, which was an instant hit. Murano Lite, as it were, setting out its tanks on the lawns of the Wolseley and Le Caprice. It's not in the league of the mother ship, but pretty damn good, so I tottered off to this latest offshoot on the hottest day of summer,



## THREE OF A KIND CAFÉS

**Café St Honoré**  
French cuisine in cordial cahoots with Scottish ingredients  
34 North West Thistle Street Lane, Edinburgh EH2 1EA; 0131 226 2211; [cafesthonore.com](http://cafesthonore.com)

**Primrose Café**  
Stalwart supplier of breakfast, cake or a three-course dinner  
1 Clifton Arcade Bristol BS8 4AA; 0117 946 5677; [primrosecafe.co.uk](http://primrosecafe.co.uk)

**Fish People Café**  
Stonking seafood on a slender price  
350 Scotland St, Glasgow G5 8QF; 0141 429 8787; [thefishpeople.co.uk](http://thefishpeople.co.uk)

having just got my body "beach ready" (modelled loosely upon that of the occasional washed-up whale) and so eager for the light Italian food of a... well, I've got to say master, haven't I? Because you can't say mistress. The exterior is grey (of course) and understated to the point of invisibility. This area is restaurant central: nearby are The Delaunay, Balthazar, The Ivy Market Grill, Christopher's, Orso – and right next door is the frankly evil-looking Charles Dickens Coffee House, choked with tourists doing their selfie thing, while crying with a fervent hope to God that Little Nell is to be spared. There were eight smiling, happy people to greet me – with new restaurants, the staff will often outnumber the punters. It had a fresh, pleasant and airy feeling, though surprisingly clubby towards the rear, with

OUR RATING  
**7/10**

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fluted tobacco leather banquettes, dark panelling and bevelled mirrors, all overlaid by a sulky mutter of indecipherable music. Proper linen napkins – and I, a man of substance, couldn't shift the deadweight white marble table even just a smidgen. So, from the array of cicchetti, broad bean and rosemary arancini – deep-fried risotto balls, and a Hartnett trademark: sublime, as ever. My guest wanted burrata – that rich and wobbly mass of rich man's mozzarella – on garlic bruschetta, while I kicked off with farfalle (the pasta that resembles, for those of you who remember, Frank Muir's bow tie) with peas and girolles. Lovely... but so very tiny for £9. The burrata was pronounced all right, but no more – as was my braised lamb shoulder with Tuscan beans and celery: intense jus, but very little meat and a whole mess of beans. And at £18...? *Troppo*. Like the wine: we had various glasses and a small carafe of perfectly everyday stuff amounting to a litre – and 65 quid. Lordy. Fried potatoes were underseasoned, a bit limp, but my guest's roast pigeon was just fabulous: red and meaty; to gnawingly devour it was a secret and delicious sin. But those mains had taken nearly an hour to arrive; I had been gnawing the napkin. Apricot and pistachio semifreddo was OK if you happen to go for cold and chewy yogurt. But oh good heavens, look who's just come up from the kitchen: the Blessed St Angela herself! Smiling and chatty in her opening week, will she perhaps...? Well no: she scowled, looked right through me and bounded away to do a kissy-kissy with a bloke in the corner. Obviously someone important, then – could even have been a restaurant critic, who can ever tell? Joseph Connolly's *A-Z of Eating Out* (Thames & Hudson) is available from Telegraph Books.



## Pint to pint

Our guide to the best British pubs. This week: *The Steam Packet, Totnes*

The New Age, upbeat spirit of Totnes is always apparent in Summer. So we did wonder, flippantly, if the town's Steam Packet Inn might have a biodynamic wheat juice bar and ambient whale music. But no, just five minutes' walk from the long hair and rainbow pantaloons of the town centre we were in a different world of warehouse apartments, jolly boats, and a sunny and spacious pub terrace where the genteel (and older) crowd sip their sauv blanc in the sun. Or, in our case, tackle a pint of refreshing, lemony Red Rock Pilsner made at the eponymous, tiny, four-barrel brewery in Teignmouth. We idled away an afternoon at the pub, half-sunk into huge-cushioned, wickerwork chairs outside on a day of mixed weather with a busy crowd and a few daring seagulls – happily the Steam Packet has a conservatory dining room by the terrace to which rained-on guests can scuttle, clutching their pints, if the heavens open. The bar itself feels cosier, all dark wood and log fires; that's where we'd choose to perch in colder months, hands round a glass of the rich and mellow brown Jail Ale, made by the Dartmoor Brewery and available on draft here. A packet boat originally carried mail packets to British embassies and colonies; later the name simply meant a scheduled ship. We saw no larger ships this time, but the pub is clearly referencing its boaty setting at the estuary of the Dart river. It has four bedrooms above the bar which must

prove popular with those seeking out the peaceful end of town during the Devon holiday season. Beers and ciders are chalked up on a blackboard. We played with food matching, pairing Old Mills' Blonde Bombshell, a fruity pale barley malt, with crispy fried Brixham squid pieces dipped in delicious lime mayo, and loved a juicy, local Ashridge medium-dry cider with smoked haddock and chorizo fishcakes and a red pepper salsa. Wines are not as inspiring as the beers and ciders, though they serve decent Provençal rosé, a snappy picpou de Pinet, and for those celebrating in style, both Taittinger and Laurent-Perrier from the grandes marques Champagne houses. Desserts are notably good – Jude's Dairy ice creams and sorbets, a sublime, light, passionfruit bavaois, and a richly flavoured, salted-caramel chocolate brownie. We dived indoors with them as the rain finally fell, finding not exactly a holistic retreat, but sanctuary in the conservatory bar. *Susy Atkins*

The Steam Packet Inn, St Peter's Quay, Totnes, Devon TQ9 5EW (01803 863880; [steampacketinn.co.uk](http://steampacketinn.co.uk))

The Telegraph Ways With Words Festival at Dartington Hall continues until July 13. [wayswithwords.co.uk](http://wayswithwords.co.uk)



IN ASSOCIATION WITH YORKSHIRE TEA

## THE VICTORIA SANDWICH

Each finalist bakes a cake for former England captain Michael Vaughan to taste and judge.



This had one layer of strawberry and prosecco jam and a layer of raspberry jam, home-made.



When I discovered that it was home-made prosecco jam, I knew why it tickled my taste buds.

# Runs aplenty and a proper posh tea as well

This Yorkshire Tea Great Cricket Tea Challenge finalist was a huge hit, says **Gareth A Davies**

Newtown Linford Cricket Club, nestling at the foot of Bradgate Park in Leicestershire, was formed in 1919, and is today a thriving hub of the local community. Bradgate Park is steeped in history, being the ancestral seat of the Grey family in the 15th century. Indeed, the family's most notable member, Lady Jane Grey, was born here and the current owner is a descendant of the Greys. The club ground, which is used by the 90 children from the village primary school, has impressive facilities, with covers, new sightcreens and electronic scoreboard all the result of the hard work undertaken by the committee and, in particular, chairman Jon Dale. The club has sponsorships and associations with 30 local businesses. Its greatest success story may well be its teas. It certainly stood out among the 130 entries in the Yorkshire Tea Great Cricket Tea Challenge – that's why it made the shortlist of six for the 2015 title – and must surely be among the most up-market to be found anywhere in the country. Local ingredients are the key. The venison in their sausages is reared locally and almost all the produce in what was a magnificent spread came from local farms. On the day of our visit, the Newtown Linford 1st XI were playing Leicestershire & Rutland league. Batting first, the home side posted

271 in the 45-over match. Dean Scaysbrook hit a powerful 93 and David Woods was unbeaten with a half-century. Dale doesn't just chair the committee. He chipped in with four wickets with his canny medium pace, as the visitors shut up shop with eight wickets down on 250. The match, played in great spirit, finished as a "winning draw" for Newtown Linford on a faster run-rate. "It is fantastic when you see clubs like this," said the former England captain Mike Gatting, one of the judges of the Great Cricket Tea Challenge who visited Newtown Linford and sampled the tea for himself. "People in government don't understand what this sort of club does for the community. It's very difficult to measure, I suppose, but if you come down here and you see the lives it affects, not just on Saturday but during the week, you start to realise the value of the club in its community. There are four secondary schools within 10 miles, and a primary school next door, who use the ground." Beccie Deighton, assistant brand manager of Yorkshire Tea, said: "Newtown Linford made the final six for this year's Great Cricket Tea Challenge because of their commitment to supporting their community by using local produce to make their cricket teas, particularly the locally reared venison. They put on a very proper tea in a wonderfully proper setting."



Ready for tea Players and spectators enjoy the cricket and the picturesque setting at Newtown Linford in Leicestershire

## JUDGES' COMMENTS

**Gareth A Davies** It was a marvellous banquet prepared by the women of the Hopkins family. The pork pie was incredible – succulent meat, delicious pastry. The beetroot and apple chutney in the cheese sandwiches was sheer perfection. The venison sausages and the toad-in-the-hole with chutney were another highlight. It does not surprise me that almost all the tea was demolished, with any leftovers being hoovered up in the pavilion after the match.



**Mike Gatting** I pushed for pork pie at Lord's when I was president of the MCC, so you can imagine my delight at a pork pie the size of a birthday cake. I loved the fact that this was all home-made from local produce. The sausages sliced into toad-in-the-hole, along with the chutney, were fabulous. The strawberry and raspberry jam cake was so tasty, as were the scones. These girls put their heart and soul into it. I pity the guys who only have 20 minutes to eat this at tea-time.

## THE TEA

This was all prepared by Sancha Hopkins and her daughters, India and Jadzia. Everything is home-made, from white chocolate and raspberry scones to rocky road cake, a layered Victoria sandwich and home-made Oreo cake. There was stilton and apricot quiche – the stilton is local – with a wonderful 5lb bucket-sized pork pie. The pie, made in the traditional Leicestershire style, includes pork belly, pork joint, smoked bacon, a pinch of nutmeg, fresh thyme, chilli powder and white pepper. There were venison sausages, doorstep sandwiches – the bloomer loaves baked at a local farm – pizza, puff pastry tart with goats cheese, basil and red and yellow peppers, and toad-in-the-hole venison sausage morsels and a marmalade chutney made by the club president's mother-in-law. And huge teapots of Yorkshire Tea, of course. "When we know the ethnicity of some of the teams, we also cater for them with vegetarian or specific food," explains Sancha, who has two sons playing for the club.

## THE COMPETITION

Yorkshire Tea, the Official Brew of England Cricket, is running the Great Cricket Tea Challenge. It is down to the final six and the winner will receive a £5,000 grant and a game against the PCA England Masters – a star-studded team of former Test players. Visit [telegraph.co.uk/yorkshiretea](http://telegraph.co.uk/yorkshiretea)

