

# TALENT at home



**Hervé Régent of The Lobster Pot**

3 Kennington Lane, SE11

**Style of cooking** French fish; seafood  
**Sample menu** Plateaux de fruits de mer; bouillabaisse; fillet of sea-bass; scallops; pancakes with crème brûlée; apricot mousse

**Kitchen requirements** The basics, but extra equipment can be hired

**Optimum size of party** None. Maximum 80 people for a cold buffet dinner

**Price guidelines** £50 a person, excluding wine

**Advance warning** One week

◁ Brittany-born M. Regent specialises in a plateaux-de-fruits-de-mer-on-wheels; he will deliver to your house at 7pm and pick up the remains at 11pm. For more ambitious parties, he will cook classic Breton fish and seafood, and can organise everything from crockery to cabaret if given enough warning.



**Martin Hadden of Halcyon Hotel**

(tel: 0171 727 7288)  
81 Holland Park, W11

**Style of cooking** French haute cuisine  
**Sample menu** Salmon brochette with spiced cabbage; grilled sea-bass with red peppers and celeriac purée; braised shin of veal; caramelised lemon tart; raspberry sorbet

**Kitchen requirements** Gas heat, worktops

**Optimum size of party** No more than 12

**Price guidelines** £35 a person, excluding wine

**Advance warning** Four weeks

Hadden, protégé of Nico Ladenis (Chez Nico at 90 Park Lane) and of Shaun Hill (Gidleigh Park), has been conjuring some of the best food this star-spangled hotel has seen in years. If you ask him nicely, he might cook some of the Ladenis signature dishes he cooks at the Halcyon: eg, lobster ravioli; lightly grilled poached scallops in pastry. NB: Monday evenings are best for Hadden.



**Alex Floyd of Leith's Restaurant**

(tel: 0171 229 4481)  
92 Kensington Park Road, W11

**Style of cooking** Modern European British

**Sample menu** Carpaccio of tuna, salad of sweetcorn and cucumber; roast best end of lamb; cardamom and coconut rice pudding

**Kitchen requirements** Cooker with oven

**Optimum size of party** Four to 24

**Price guidelines** £35 a person, excluding wine

**Advance warning** One week

If you flunked Prue Leith's cookery school, hire a chef from her eponymous restaurant instead. In his nine years at Leith's, Floyd has resurrected its culinary credentials, catapulting it to the forefront of the London scene. Floyd is never more at home than when working with game, fish and shellfish teamed with oil-based sauces. The deceptively simple end-product belies complex, hard-won techniques.



**Vineet Bhatia of Star of India**

(tel: 0171 373 2901)  
154 Old Brompton Road, SW5

**Style of cooking** Pan-regional Indian  
**Sample menu** Traditional dishes (chicken, lamb, vegetable); aubergine steaks stuffed with potato, cottage cheese and tomato sauce, served with yoghurt and mint dip

**Kitchen requirements** Somewhere to keep food warm

**Optimum size of party** 10, but can handle up to 50

**Price guidelines** Entirely negotiable

**Advance warning** One week

Excellent food from one of London's most famous and flamboyant restaurants has redefined the Indian takeaway. Much of the cooking is done at the restaurant, so unusual locations are no problem: eg, parties for 50 in derelict buildings. Full Star of India service includes a floor show by the owner, Reza Mahammad, if you ask him nicely.



**Kam-Po But of Ken Lo's Memories**

(tel: 0171 730 7734)  
67 Ebury Street, SW1

**Style of cooking** Cantonese, Szechwan and Peking

**Sample menu** Ginger lobster; Peking duck; shark's fin soup; garlic prawns; chicken done various ways

**Kitchen requirements** None (even brings his own gas heat)

**Optimum size of party** Minimum 10, maximum 30

**Price guidelines** £40 a person, excluding wine

**Advance warning** One week

Shanghai-born Kam-Po But arrived at Ken Lo's Memories via Hong Kong. After 16 years at the Bunsen burner of this ultra-smart Chinese, he shows no signs of amnesia. Most of his private clients are Asians who go for his four-course blow-out banquet. It may not be a wok on the wild side, but the quality is superb. Mr But is also reputedly one of the world's finest noodle spinners.



**Vincenzo Borgonzolo of Al San Vincenzo**

(tel: 0171 262 9623)  
30 Connaught Street, W2

**Style of cooking** Mediterranean home cooking

**Sample menu** Baked aubergine with mozzarella and tomatoes; sea-bass baked with fennel; fillet of pork with wild mushrooms; panettone pudding

**Kitchen requirements** Gas cooker, pots and pans

**Optimum size of party** Two to 10

**Price guidelines** By negotiation; minimum £100

**Advance warning** One week

Connoisseurs of Italian home cooking must try Vincenzo Borgonzolo's idiosyncratic southern Italian repertoire, which he picked up on his mother's knee in Naples. The quality is from another world. Ask Elaine Borgonzolo to suggest some equally unusual Italian wines from the restaurant's cellar. □