



## FEATURED FOOD &amp; DRINK

## Stoke Place: The Garden Room

BY CARÛ SANDERS

Carû Sanders says that the combination of great food, practicality and impressive prices make Stoke Place a winner.

## TOP FOOD &amp; DRINK

READ MORE

- 1.
2. [Cinnamon Kitchen](#)
3. [Crushpad](#)
4. [Eight Club](#)
5. [Fox and Anchor](#)

## SPORT

## The best football team ever?

Robbie Wells says that it's player loyalty and a focus on youth that makes Barcelona great.



- + [Crisis, what crisis?](#)
- + ['Twas the season to be Ollie](#)
- + [My sail of the century](#)

MORE: [SPORT](#)

## DEEP READ

### Food & Drink Reviews



## Stoke Place: The Garden Room

BY CARÛ SANDERS, UPDATED TODAY AT 10:18

BE THE FIRST TO COMMENT ON THIS STORY

Carû Sanders says that the combination of great food, practicality and impressive prices make Stoke Place a winner.

The English aristocracy has taken one hell of a tumble, leaving toffs only good for reality television programmes where they bumble their way through crumbling piles for our entertainment. If said freezing pile fails to make

the grade for country house makeover programme and renovation for the masses to gawp at, then its fate may lie in the hands of a hotel group who will plug the leaking roof and peeling walls and transform into another 'fashionable rural manor' with a new and marketable twist. So when Stoke Place ended up on Square Mile's radar, there was a palpable yawn.

However, this 17th Queen Anne House came with a reasonable price tag so we thought we give it a bash. As premium country breaks rarely come under a grand for a two-night stay and sumptuous dinners, we expected a tarted-up tea room and dining room with sub-standard food and gothic service. But hipness actually abounds and unlike the majority of so-called groovy retreats, it doesn't swarm with megamouth, over-confident media types. Better still, you don't have to trek out to the provinces - it's a 20 minute train ride from Paddington.

Saved by Tej and Sarina Dhillon (owners of the Dhillon Group) in 2005 from being run into the ground as a conference centre, Stoke Place is reached from a sweeping gravel driveway and sits within 26 acres of bountiful Capability Brown designed gardens. Inside, it's a mix of old and new with contemporary furnishings, colour and detail with surreal modern touches. The restaurant is a mix of hip and heritage overseen by Craig Van Der Meer who gives the traditional country house menu an overhaul and some much-needed edge. Seasonal and locally sourced ingredients are used to create interesting versions of traditional fare.

The Garden Room restaurant has just been awarded two rosettes by the AA Guide and has been recommended for a third. Classic dishes are reworked and combine immaculately cooked seasonal ingredients. Well-known dishes are modified or embellished with surprise elements, foams or emulsions. We enjoyed lobster tortellini combined with baby fennel, Pernod jelly and bisque foam. Meanwhile, classic British fillet of beef is served with tongue, cheek, swede and borderlaise sauce and the classic British cheese board is reworked into a Reblochon ice cream, Perl Lâs, complete with sweet figs, red onion marmalade and manchego crisp.

Relaxed, urban with plenty of adult comforts, Stoke Place is the ideal faux-toff palace and recommended as a designer break without the cynical pricing.

**Lodgings**

40 Bedrooms

**Credit Cards**

All major credit cards accepted

**Enquiries**

reservations@stokeplace.co.uk

T: +44(0) 1753 534790

**Website**[stokeplace.co.uk](http://stokeplace.co.uk)