



CAFÉ

*tabac*

MENU



I'm sixteen and my life as Scotland Road's resident, picked on, gawky, effeminate kid had found a dark unrelenting climax. I've reached the peak of my regularly battered/tattered war-torn tether and can't take anymore, "Scottie" had always been too much, but now too much was more than enough. Burning in a broken-glass/red-brick kiln of unemployed and increasingly dangerous machismo, I was definitely nearing the end.

Luckily in the nick of time, I discovered The Everyman Youth Theatre and as quick as you can say "miracle" one occurred... I finally escaped. The Everyman changed everything, me included, like stepping into my own imagination. The youth theatre gave me so much, a new life, new friends, new direction, a voice, a colourfully eccentric city centre... but far more importantly, it gave me Cafe Tabac.

I'd been to Sayers, but I'd never been to me and Cafe Tabac was every bit counter-culturally alive as the youth theatre. Never thought for a single second, a working-class no one like myself could be part of anything as glowingly sophisticated as Tabac, until realising Cafe Tabac was much cleverer, much warmer, much more than just merely "sophisticated". It was a malleable anarcho everything, a city-centre playground and for us theatre kids, another performance space. Light years from Wimpy, less heavenly than Food for All, way more out there than the Armadillo Tea Rooms, far more starry than even the rock 'n' rollin' Kardomah. In many ways it was "Planet Tabac" and we spent so much time orbiting its atmospheres... other dimensions of extended play and imagineering.

Can't recall the first time I actually went in, but completely remember the feeling of becoming part of it. It somehow felt heady, yet calm, looked auburn and purple, exotically smelled of food and bubbling thought. It's inside, unlike the insides of any other place, a communicable muted vibrancy, energy emitting and vital. Me and mine blossomed and we weren't easy, spending hours around one flapjack and a far too refilled pot of Earl Grey tea. We were loud, competing, thrilled and vulgar, taking whatever hysterical improvisation we'd just done at youth theatre and continuing it in Tabac. Some nights there'd be just three or four of us, other nights ten to twenty and no word of a lie on Saturday afternoons, perhaps up to forty. Tabac housed, protected, embraced, but more importantly (for all our unrefined anarchies), it got us.

Tabac is the tawny candle lit place we haphazardly matured... from outrageous effervescing whirlwinds to simmering camp all encompassing breezes. As the cafe aged so did we, I can still sense our uncontainable energies becoming more fluid, more relaxed. We were morphing into the adults we were because of Tabac, every moment in there startlingly new, organic and halcyon. Can't think of another environment (for me), other than the youth theatre where that was the case. From an effete Scottie Road kid terrified to use his voice for fear of getting punched, to a theatrical loud mouthed queen unable to shut up. I carry those enormous experiences with me everywhere, definitely in the expansiveness of my writing, defiantly on stage. One of my very fondest memories is our select youth theatre writing group, scribbling/giggling away, then excitedly sharing what we'd written. Cafe Tabac is the first place I ever wrote and performed poetry to and for others, before Tabac, I never thought I could.

Don't want to mention names because there are so many, but just got to mention Bold Streets ultimate matriarch... Rita. Rita

was truly boss, running Tabac with a silken, diamanté oven 'n' boxing glove. Rita was a "take no prisoners" personality who couldn't hide the emotive generosity of her truly indomitable spirit. However hard she may have sometimes appeared on the outside, inside she cared deeply. She was one of those people who if you made smile or laugh, it was a result, if you got a favourable reaction from her, you felt good. Rita Lawrence was very naturally glamorous, even in a floured-up pinny, rolling pin and rubber gloves, she could work a look. My best friend Brian 'n' I loved her hair (we'd have bets on what it would be like that day, the winner getting a banger special and a pot of lapsang souchong), from Billie Holiday to Diana Ross, or just our Rita... she was in possession of an always wonderful, ever changing riah. Tabac was Rita's domain, her palace and she it's Queen, present, noble, regal even and worn like crowns, a glorious range of expertly milliner'd hats.

Sometimes we'd get so rowdy 'n' unruly she'd unceremoniously shoo us out, well perhaps not shoo, more like hurl, her natural Boudicca like authority to the fore. She really had to, we'd probably spent an age sat round little more than a long empty milkshake and the still picked at crumbs of a caramel slice. Once told me, she didn't like doing that but had a business to run and we certainly weren't big spenders. Rita commanded a great deal of respect, a character of such steel, charm and certainty, you just did what she charismatically said.

From May 1979 to whenever, Cafe Tabac was our place, alive with all the eclectic zhuzh Liverpool could muster, a microcosm of the best bits of a brilliantly bohemian, multicultural city. Rita knew this, knew how important a haven her gaff was, she instinctively knew it was a very necessary "inside" for the cities ever burgeoning, ever collecting outsiders. Cafe Tabac was certainly the Queerest Cafe I've ever had the pleasure to screech in, a golden age in mine and so many others lives. While Liverpool was being unceremoniously declined 'n' dismantled by Thatcher, Tabac and Rita managed to stay stoic, caring, spirited and relevant. To call it an oasis sounds cliché but in the encroaching social desert created by the then government it was far more. It was a tangible, celebratory, partying mirage, selling the best chilli con carne (with side salad 'n' mayonnaise), in town.

Big love to you Cafe Tabac, happy fortieth... here's to forty more and then some. You were instrumental in making my teenage/young adult life truly memorable 'n' joyous, and for that I can't thank you enough.

*Gerry Potter*

Photo: Soo Wilkinson





# Pancakes

- TRADITIONAL - SUGAR AND LEMON (V)** ..... £5.50  
**THE AMERICAN - CRISPY BACON & MAPLE SYRUP** ..... £6.00  
**MIXED FRUIT (V)** ..... £6.00

# All Day Breakfasts

*served until late.*

- RITA'S FULL ENGLISH** ..... £9.25  
Free range egg, 2 bacon, 2 sausage, black pudding, tomato, field mushrooms, baked beans, hash brown & buttered toast.
- THE BUILDERS CHOICE** ..... £9.00  
2 free range fried eggs, hand carved honey roast ham or bacon, pile of chips, 2 slices buttered bread & mug of tea.
- BREAKFAST BAP OR MUFFIN** ..... £4.50  
Any 3 items in a freshly toasted bap or muffin (egg, bacon, sausage, black pudding, hash brown).
- VEGAN BREAKFAST (Ve)** ..... £8.75  
Veggie sausage, spinach, avocado, beans, tomatoes, roast field mushrooms, hash brown & toast.
- VEGGIE BREAKFAST BAP OR MUFFIN (V)** ..... £4.50  
Any 3 items in a freshly toasted bap or muffin (egg, veggie sausage, hash brown, mushrooms, halloumi, tomato).
- THE FISH LOVER** ..... £8.00  
Smoked salmon & scrambled egg with avocado on toasted bloomer.
- AVO ON TOAST (V)** ..... £7.50  
Smashed chilli and lime avocado with 2 free range poached eggs on toasted bloomer with fresh coriander.
- EGGS BENEDICT** ..... £7.50  
2 Free range poached eggs with hand carved honey roast ham or bacon on a toasted muffin with hollandaise sauce.
- EGGS ROYALE** ..... £7.50  
2 Free range poached eggs with smoked salmon on a toasted muffin with hollandaise sauce.
- EGGS FLORENTINE (V)** ..... £7.00  
2 Free range poached eggs with wilted spinach on a toasted muffin with hollandaise sauce.
- OMELETTE WITH 3 EGGS AND CHEESE (V)** ..... £5.00  
Additional toppings, price per item: onion, spinach, mushroom, tomato, feta cheese, mature cheese, bacon, ham, chicken ..... £1.00
- ADDITIONAL BREAKFAST ITEMS TO ADD TO ANY BREAKFAST OR BRUNCH;**  
Mushrooms, tomato, baked beans, toast, bacon, sausage, egg, black pudding or hash browns..... £1.00

*(please kindly note, we do not allow the swapping of items on our breakfast menu)*

# Burgers

*all served with Fries and Coleslaw*

- THE TABAC DOUBLE BURGER** ..... £9.50  
2 6oz locally made pattys with mature cheddar, red onion, baby gem, tomato & pickles on a toasted brioche.
- JERKIN AROUND** ..... £9.00  
Chicken breast with authentic jerk spices, baby gem, tomato & pickles on a toasted brioche.
- THE TFC (Tabac Fried Chicken)** ..... £9.00  
Buttermilk fried chicken with baby gem, twisted mayo and sweetcorn relish on a toasted brioche.
- THE SWEET PEA (V)** ..... £8.50  
Spiced sweet potato and chick pea patty with feta, baby gem, pickled chillies, twisted mayo in a brioche bun.

# Sandwiches

*all served with Fries and Coleslaw on white or brown bloomer bread*

- HAM AND CHEESE TOASTY** ..... £7.25  
Hand carved honey roast ham and mature cheddar with hot english mustard and garlic mayo on toasted bloomer bread.
- BLT** ..... £7.25  
Bacon rashers, lettuce and tomato on bloomer bread with mayonnaise (toasted or untoasted).
- CLUB SANDWICH** ..... £7.75  
Buttermilk chicken, bacon rashers, lettuce and tomato with mayonnaise on bloomer bread (toasted or untoasted).
- FISH FINGER BUTTY** ..... £7.75  
Beer battered haddock fingers with mild cheese, pickled onions & tartar sauce on bloomer bread.
- THE SECRET GARDEN (V)** ..... £7.00  
Garlic roast mushrooms with watercress, spinach, avocado, tomato and feta with garlic mayo on bloomer bread.

“Tabac was essential for getting a job, as my agent would telephone the cafe, as they knew I’d be there. The lovely Rita used to field calls from international agents, and I remember once told me i had a job in Monte Carlo!”

**MARGI CLARKE**

Photo: Mark McNulty





# Salads

- HOUSE OF TABAC** ..... £8.25  
Green beans, roast tomatoes, watercress toasted seeds, soft poached egg and shallot dressing - served with chicken or feta.
- FAUX CAESAR** ..... £8.25  
Baby gem, garlic dressing, parmesan and crisp croutons - with chicken or prawn.
- THE MARIE ROSE** ..... £8.25  
Prawns and smoked salmon with crisp leaves, cucumber, spring onion and a house made marie rose sauce, served with bread and butter.

# Big Plates

- RITA'S GOULASH** ..... £8.50  
A tasty heartwarming Hungarian stew of beef and tender vegetables with a spiced paprika broth.
- SCOUSE** ..... £8.50  
A local traditional stew of beef, carrots and potatoes served with pickled red cabbage and crusty bread.
- BLIND SCOUSE (V)** ..... £7.75  
A vegetable stew of carrots, leeks and potatoes served with pickled red cabbage and crusty bread.
- TABAC'S FISH & CHIPS** ..... £9.25  
Fresh haddock fillet in crisp beer batter with crushed minted peas, chips, garlic mayo and fresh lemon.
- CHICKEN IN A BASKET** ..... £8.00  
Goujons with chips and bbq sauce.
- SCAMPI IN A BASKET** ..... £8.50  
Breaded whitby scampi with chips, tartare sauce and bread and butter.

# Bits and Bobs

*to add or share - 3 for £12*

- SWEET POTATO FRIES (V)** ..... £3.75
- CAJUN SPICED FRIES (V)** ..... £3.25
- FRIES (V)** ..... £3.25
- LOADED FRIES WITH CHEESE AND BACON** ..... £4.50
- HUMMUS & PITTA (V)** ..... £4.50
- BEER BATTERED ONION RINGS (V)** ..... £4.25
- JALEPENO POPPERS (V)** ..... £4.50

# Desserts

- BLACK FOREST GATEAUX** ..... £5.50  
A warm chocolate cake with cherries and chantilly cream.
- KNICKERBOCKER GLORY** ..... £5.50  
The classic icecream sundae, Ice cream, fruit mix, coulis and cream.
- SHERRY TRIFLE** ..... £5.50  
Sherry, Apricot Jam, sponge, custard and cream with sugar toasted almonds.
- CHEESE BOARD** ..... £6.00  
Mature Cheddar, Branston Pickle and Ritz Crackers

# Drinks

## Hot Drinks

- BREAKFAST TEA** ..... £2.30
- DARJEELING** ..... £2.30
- EARL GREY** ..... £2.30
- GREEN TEA** ..... £2.30
- PEPPERMINT TEA** ..... £2.30

Our coffee blend is 'Tabac espresso' - it is a modern take on a classic. It's a blend of two distinctive coffees, which combine to produce an espresso with a deep, rich chocolatey body, pronounced toffee sweetness, a complex fruity edge, and a hint of bittersweet cocoa at the finish. It's well balanced and combines beautifully with milk, where it adds punchy caramel, smooth milk chocolate notes and gets even sweeter. Produced in Liverpool by Neighbourhood Coffee, the cities first speciality roasters

- ESPRESSO** ..... £2.80
- MACCHIATO** ..... £2.80
- FLAT WHITE** ..... £2.80
- CORTADO** ..... £2.90
- AMERICANO** ..... £2.50/£3.20
- CAPPUCCINO** ..... £2.50/£3.20
- LATTE** ..... £2.60/£3.80
- MOCHA** ..... £2.60/£3.80
- HOT CHOCOLATE** ..... £2.80/£3.50  
Cream & marshmallows ..... £0.60p  
Flavoured syrups ..... £0.60p  
(vanilla, hazelnut, caramel, gingerbread plus more)
- MILK ALTERNATIVES** ..... £0.40p  
(Soy, almond, oat)

Please see board for snacks and nibbles, served between 9pm-1am

(V) Vegetarian. (Ve) Vegan.

Our food is prepared in food areas where cross contamination may occur, and our menu descriptions do not include all ingredients. If you have any questions, allergies or intolerances, please let us know before ordering.



Photo: Francesco Mellina



## Draught

Half/Pint

<b>COKE</b> .....	£2.00/£3.00
<b>DIET COKE</b> .....	£2.00/£3.00
<b>LEMONADE</b> .....	£2.00/£3.00

## Cans

<b>TING GRAPEFRUIT SODA</b> .....	£2.60
<b>SAN PELLEGRINO BLOOD ORANGE</b> .....	£2.60
<b>SAN PELLEGRINO LIMONATA</b> .....	£2.60
<b>RED BULL</b> .....	£2.60

## Bottles

<b>COKE</b> .....	£2.60
<b>DIET COKE</b> .....	£2.60
<b>STILL WATER</b> .....	£2.00/£3.50
<b>SPARKLING WATER</b> .....	£2.00/£3.50

## Juices

<b>ORANGE</b> .....	£2.00/£3.00
<b>APPLE</b> .....	£2.00/£3.00
<b>PINEAPPLE</b> .....	£2.00/£3.00
<b>CRANBERRY</b> .....	£2.00/£3.00

## Bottled Beers

<b>CORONA</b> 4.6% ABV .....	£4.30
<b>HEINEKEN</b> 5% ABV .....	£4.20
<b>HEINEKEN BLUE</b> 0.05% ABV .....	£4.00
<b>WYLD WOOD CIDER</b> 6% ABV .....	£4.60
<b>KOPPARBERG</b> 4% ABV .....	£4.50
<b>DESPERADO</b> 5.9% ABV .....	£4.40
<b>RUDE MECHANICALS FEATHER WEIGHT PUNCHY PILSNER</b> 4.5% ABV .....	£4.50
<b>RUDE MECHANICALS FIRST AUDITION PALE ALE</b> 4.5% ABV .....	£4.50
<b>ORGANIC CELIA PREMIUM CZECH LAGER - GLUTEN FREE</b> 4.5% ABV .....	£4.50
<b>VEDETT - EXTRA BLONDE PREMIUM LAGER</b> 5% ABV .....	£4.50

## Draft

<b>SAN MIGUEL</b> 5% ABV .....	£2.00/£4.00
<b>BLUE MOON</b> 5.4% ABV .....	£2.15/£4.30
<b>GUINNESS</b> 4.2% ABV .....	£2.05/£4.10
<b>LOVE LANE</b> 4.5% ABV .....	£2.25/£4.50
<b>PORETTI</b> 4.8% ABV .....	£2.15/£4.30
<b>GUEST IPA</b> .....	ASK FOR DETAILS

## Wines

YOUTHCLARE  
175ml/250ml/Bottle

### WHITE

<b>JEAN-PAUL BLANC</b> .....	£4.50/£6.00/£17.50
easy-drinking, floral, medium-dry.	
<b>SIERRA GRANDE CHARDONNAY</b> .....	£5.00/£6.80/£19.00
unoaked, peachy and pure.	
<b>MIRABELLO PINOT GRIGIO</b> .....	£5.00/£6.80/£19.00
fresh, floral and citrusy.	
<b>THE CLOUD FACTORY SAUVIGNON BLANC</b> .....	£6.00/£7.80/£23.00
bright, perfumed and tropical.	

<b>DUC DE MORNAY PICPOUL DE PINET</b> .....	£24.00
crisp, ripe, saline.	

<b>DOMAINE DE LA MOTTE PETIT CHABLIS</b> .....	£28.00
elegant, zesty, mineral.	

### ROSE

<b>FAUNA ROSE</b> .....	£4.80/£6.30/£18.00
fresh raspberry and redcurrant.	

<b>ANCORA PINOT GRIGIO ROSE</b> .....	£5.00/£6.80/£19.00
cherries and strawberries, dry.	

### RED

<b>RAME GARNACHA</b> .....	£4.60/£6.00/£17.50
bright, ripe and fruity.	

<b>GRAND CAPE SHIRAZ</b> .....	£4.90/£6.60/£18.50
blackberry, blueberry, smoky.	

<b>PECULIER MR PAT MERLOT</b> .....	£5.00/£6.80/£19.00
plush plums and herbs.	

<b>NIETO MALBEC, MENDOZA</b> .....	£6.00/£7.80/£23.00
dense, silky, spicy.	

<b>BARON DE POCE PINOT NOIR</b> .....	£24.00
elegant, juicy, red berries.	

<b>VEGA DEL RAYO RIOJA RESERVA</b> .....	£26.00
mature, oaky, smooth.	

### SPARKLING

<b>LUNETTA PROSECCO</b> .....	£5.80/ £23
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<b>HENNETS BRUT ROSE</b> .....	£40
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<b>VEUVE CLICQUOT</b> .....	£65
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"Pete, Lynne and I would often visit Café Tabac. We would spend our time chatting and eating our favourite dish on the menu. BLT!"

**FRANCESCO MELLINA**  
PHOTOGRAPHER



# Tabac Cocktails

**COSMOPOLITAN** ..... £7.75 


Ketel One Citron, Cointreau, lime juice, cranberry juice

**LONG ISLAND ICE TEA** ..... £8.00 


Ketel One Vodka, Tanqueray Gin, Pampero Rum, Cointreau, lemon juice, gomme, bitters - diet coke.

**NEGRONI** ..... £8.50 

Tanqueray 10, Campari, Martini Rosso - orange twist.

**THE RITA** ..... £7.75 

El Jimador Blanco, lime juice, agave syrup - half salt rim.

**BLOODY MARY** ..... £7.75 

Ketel One Vodka, Tobasco Sauce, Worcester sauce, Big Tom, salt, pepper.

**THE MIGHTY WAHTINI** ..... £8.00 

Tanqueray Gin, Cointreau, lemon juice, orange marmalade.

**OLD FASHIONED** ..... £8.50 

Makers Mark, gomme, angostura bitters - orange twist.

**SINGAPORE SLING** ..... £8.50 


Tanqueray Gin, apricot brandy, pineapple juice, lime juice, Benedictine, Cointreau, grenadine, bitters.

**ESPRESSO MARTINI** ..... £8.50 


Ketel One Vodka, Cafe Patron xo, double espresso, vanilla syrup - coffee beans.

**THE BREZHNEV** ..... £8.50 

Vanilla vodka, Passoa, passion fruit puree, pineapple juice, lemon juice, bitters - Prosecco.

**SCOUSE & STORMY** ..... £7.50 


Goslings Black Seal Rum, ginger beer, bitters, lime juice, gomme.

**DAIQUIRI** ..... £8.00 

Pampero Rum, lime juice, gomme, bitters - choice of syrup - blackcherry, strawberry, passion fruit.

**THE TEARDROP EXPLODES** ..... £8.00 


Ketel One, Passoa, Southern Comfort, lime juice, pineapple juice, orange juice, grenadine, ginger ale.

**THE BLONDE FIST** ..... £8.00 


Makers Mark, Briottet Apricot, peach, lemon juice, bitters.

**SCALLYWAG JAZ** ..... £8.00 

Pampero Blanco, Pampero Gold, Velvet Falernum, pineapple juice, almond syrup, lime juice, orange bitters, mango puree.

**CHLOE'S POEM** ..... £8.00 

Fraise De Boise, St Germain, strawberry, lemon juice, prosecco.

**THE KILLING MOON** ..... £7.50 

Malibu, Midori, pineapple, lime juice, bitters.


**FRANKIE SAYS** ..... £7.50 

Aperol, Prosecco, soda, orange slice.


**CASEY'S KISS** ..... £7.50 

Elderflower, Prosecco, soda.

## Gin Serves

**TANQUERAY 10** ..... £8.50 

Tanqueray 10, Fever Tree Tonic, pink grapefruit wedge and juniper berries.

**LARIOS ROSE** ..... £8.50 

Larios Rose, Fever Tree Tonic, strawberries.

**WHITLEY NEILL RHUBARB** ..... £8.50 

Whitley Neill Rhubarb, Fever Tree Tonic, ginger slices, juniper berries & mint sprig.

**BEEFEATER BLOOD ORANGE** ..... £8.50 

Beefeater Blood Orange, Fever Tree Tonic, dehydrated orange slice, juniper & mint sprig.

Please let us know if you have any allergy requirements.

