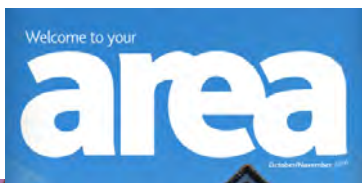




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Fiddlers Yvonne and Liz Kane with concertina-player Edel Fox

IRELAND COMES TO CAMDEN

Return to Camden Town is back and this time the festival of Irish culture promises to be even better. Music concerts and dance events are spread over separate weekends this year, meaning fans can enjoy both elements to the full.

Confirmed artists include platinum-selling De Danann – once described as “the Rolling Stones of Irish traditional music” – alongside internationally renowned band Dervish and sensational siblings the Kane Sisters with Edel Fox on the concertina. There’s just time to dust

off your dancing shoes before the following weekend’s schedule begins, with the chance to learn a few set steps before letting loose at an authentic Irish knees-up.

RETURN TO CAMDEN TOWN, LONDON IRISH CENTRE, 50 CAMDEN SQUARE, CAMDEN, NW1 9XB. LATE-NIGHT EVENTS HELD AT NEARBY VENUES. FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL 07871 088121 OR VISIT www.returntocamden.org

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SHAKA ZULU

Seating 750 diners and staged across two expansive floors, Stables Market’s new African-inspired super-venue Shaka Zulu is almost a continent in itself. Competing with Gilgamesh to provide the precinct’s most theatrical and extravagant dining experience, it combines a choice of bars, a vibrant restaurant and a members-only retreat.

Handmade mosaics, wood carvings and tribal masks cover the walls and ceilings, while African drummers and dancers add a further ring of authenticity. Indeed, Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini has even given his royal blessing to this opulent establishment and will remain closely involved with it. Upstairs in the Lounge Bar, a champagne cocktail bearing his name is served alongside the UK’s widest selection of South African wines.

As towering warrior statues look on, authentic South African cuisine including *skilpadjies*, *sosaties* and tomato *bredie* is served up in the Braai Grill Room. This is the only restaurant in the world to offer Red Poll beef and Dorper lamb from the Queen’s Sandringham Estate, but the more exotic meats on the menu somehow manage to make these unusual delicacies look tame. Springbok, kudu and ostrich terrine with spiced *bobotie* chutney is like a successful safari on a plate, while the late-night seafood bar offers kingklip, Cape salmon and oysters from Namibia.

Crowned Europe’s largest South African eatery, Shaka Zulu proudly offers indulgence on an almost unprecedented scale. Yet with £1 from every meal pledged to charity Education Africa, it seems this 27,000 square foot behemoth is generous in more ways than one.

SHAKA ZULU, STABLES MARKET, CAMDEN, NW1 8AH. FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL 0203 376 9911 OR VISIT www.shaka-zulu.com



FINANCIAL NEWS

IT’S A MARATHON, NOT A SPRINT

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has probably been under its greatest media scrutiny in the past few months since its creation in 1997 and for the 18th consecutive month, the Bank of England kept the base rate at 0.5% in September.

With so much conflicting data and economic forecasts being published, the committee finds itself at the centre of the debate on whether the UK’s recovery is well underway or if there are tougher times still to come.

The two remaining concerns are inflation and weakening economic growth. Inflation on the Consumer Price Index stayed steady at 3.1% in August according to the Office of National Statistics and while the figure has lowered from 3.7% in April, many commentators hoped it would have dropped below 3%, in order to reach the Bank of England’s 2% target. The rising international prices of wheat and cotton are blamed for some increases in costs and inflation will continue to be watched closely, as any sustained upsurge will need to be combated by a controlled increase in the bank base rate.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has produced forecasts of growth in the world economy of 4.6% this year and 4.3% in 2011, dominated by expected progress in developing countries such as China and India. Closer to home, the UK GDP grew by 1.1% in the second quarter of 2010, but expectations are that further development will slow to 1% or less across the rest of this year due to weaker exports.

To support economic growth, some commentators are now calling for the Bank of England to consider a second phase of its Quantitative Easing programme in conjunction with a rise in the base rate. This initiative would move to control inflation as well as stimulating economic recovery at the same time.

Whatever the MPC decides, the process of increasing the base rate slowly, keeping inflation under regulation and injecting more money into the economy if required are all going to be part of a medium term plan. However, rather than being sidetracked by the varied and sometimes conflicting statistical data being published, speculators should take a step back from the predictions and look at the big picture. As we keep focused on the targets ahead, general trends show – with access to funding permitting – house prices have remained resilient and the demand for property is still high.

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