

with asparagus, new potatoes and herb butter, or roast pork fillet with chorizo, paprika and white beans. There's much praise for lunch and early evening meal deals. The wine list majors on France yet doesn't ignore equally exciting and good-value picks from elsewhere.

**Chef/s:** Jason Parker and David Hey. **Closed:** Mon, 25 and 26 Dec, 1 and 2 Jan. **Meals:** main courses £13 to £20. Set L £11 (2 courses) to £16. Set D £15 (2 courses) to £18. Sun L £19 (2 courses) to £22.

**Details:** 70 seats. 30 seats outside. Bar. Wheelchairs. Music.

## Lunya

**Cooking score:** 1  
**Spanish | £25**

Barton Arcade, Deansgate, Manchester, M3 2BB  
Tel no: (0161) 413 3317  
lunya.co.uk



Pay homage to Catalonia at this restaurant, bar and deli in the splendid Victorian Barton Arcade, where the shelves are stocked with some 1,400 products. The bar has Spain covered, from cider to sherry, and the deli counter and kitchen offer fabulous cheeses, hams carved from the bone, and tapas old and new. On a long and eye-catching carta, pollo al moro is slow-cooked chicken with preserved lemons and Moroccan spices, dinky baby squid (chipirones) arrive with allioli, and cauliflower gets treated like royalty in a dish with yoghurt tahini and pomegranate molasses. The clued-up regional Spanish wine list opens at £18.95.

**Chef/s:** Patricia Salcedo Terol. **Closed:** 25 Dec, 1 Jan. **Meals:** tapas £5 to £20. Set L £10 to £14. Set D £22 to £28. Tasting menu £25 (11 courses) to £36.

**Details:** 130 seats. 30 seats outside. V menu. Vg menu. Bar. Wheelchairs. Music.

## Manchester House

**Cooking score:** 5  
**Modern British | £75**

Tower 12, 18-22 Bridge Street, Manchester, M3 3BZ  
Tel no: (0161) 835 2557  
manchesterhouse.uk.com

Promoted to head chef now that Aiden Byrne has left the building (for D&D London's nearby 20 Stories, see entry), Nathaniel Tofan ably continues Manchester House's refined modern British tradition. The suspicion that the party may have moved elsewhere is as unfair as it is inevitable; the menu was already on a steady journey away from ostentation. Cooking, as in a starter of spiced quail draped with a jelly that channels mango chutney, or salmon with ricotta and a garnish-as-star salad of tomatoes with anchovies, salmon roe and chive dressing, is solid but lively. Spikes of intense flavour, like the smoked eel and green apple with crisp-carapaced pork belly, are skilfully deployed. Pudding might be chocolate pavé with lychee and rose or, more interesting, buckwheat mousse with compressed strawberries and damp pistachio micro-sponge. Some correspondents are 'not convinced' that the full works – tasting menu plus wine flight – represents value for money; lunch is slightly less painful.

**Chef/s:** Nathaniel Tofan. **Closed:** Sun, Mon, 2 weeks Jan, 2 weeks Aug. **Meals:** set L £24 (2 courses) to £30. Set D £50. Tasting menu £95. **Details:** 82 seats. Bar. Wheelchairs. Music.

## Refuge

**Cooking score:** 2  
**International | £50**

Oxford Street, Manchester, M60 7HA  
Tel no: (0161) 233 5151  
refugemcr.co.uk



In the afterglow of its refurb, the old Refuge Assurance Company has settled into its good looks. With the town hall closed for some serious zhuzhing, the Principal Hotel's abundantly tiled, carefully revived bar and

restaurant is a great place to admire the glamour of Manchester. DJs turned restaurateurs The Unabombers remain in charge and, in dancefloor terms (there's one in the club downstairs, should you need it), the menu is all killer, no filler. Small plates like slow-cooked massaman ox cheek and scorched mackerel with cucumber and beetroot gazpacho shimmy off the page, if execution can feel a little careless. Mussels with roasted garlic and sour cream are fat, sweet and pungently salty, with chargrilled bread perfect for dunking, though burrata with orange and radicchio is rubbery and sad. Afterwards, citrus and spice Eccles cakes could do with warming through, but the pairing with Mrs Kirkham's Lancashire is a revelation every time. Cocktails, beers and easy-drinking wines play to the crowd.

**Chef/s:** Alex Worrall. **Meals:** small plates £4 to £11. Sun L £15 to £17. **Details:** 167 seats.

## TNQ

**Cooking score:** 2  
**Modern British | £31**

108 High Street, Manchester, M4 1HQ  
Tel no: (0161) 832 7115  
tnq.co.uk



A relaxed casual place with lots of wood and little in the way of designer affectations, Jobe Ferguson's long-standing all-day eatery is the place to come for reliable, freshly cooked food. The tone is set immediately with variously coloured salt-baked beetroots – served as chunks and purées – with a very tangy goat's cheese beignet, and a ham hock and Bury black pudding terrine with apple and onion relish. Perfectly cooked Goosnargh chicken breast comes with crispy skin, gently fried chicken livers, spring onion hash browns and truffle foam, while fillet of hake is teamed with chorizo, tomatoes and mussels. The pick of desserts may well be a blackberry panna cotta with mulled fruits and meringue, and the assortment of artisanal British cheeses is also worth exploring. There's an excellent-

value 'express menu', too, served from noon until 6.30pm. Wine markups are reasonable, and there's a decent by-the-glass selection.

**Chef/s:** Anthony Fielden. **Meals:** main courses £14 to £24. Set L £16 (2 courses) to £20. Set D £30. Sun L £20. **Details:** 55 seats. Wheelchairs. Music.

### ★ NEW ENTRY ★

## 20 Stories

**Cooking score:** 4  
**Modern European | £45**

No.1 Spinningfields, 1 Hardman Square, Manchester, M3 3EB  
Tel no: (0161) 204 3333  
20stories.co.uk

Throw your head back, and 20 Stories' terrace is tantalisingly visible from Spinningfields, Manchester's glitzy shopping and dining district below. On a sunny evening the double-height space with glass walls, open roof and busy bar seems to be the whole point of D&D London's investment in the city. Inside, Aiden Byrne – ex of Manchester House (see entry) – is in charge of food in both grill and restaurant, and it's the latter that visitors commend. If the smartest seats arguably have the least sexy view – unless you really like the Ordsall Chord – Byrne has calibrated his cooking to stand up to a slick, glamorous room. Dishes are now less fussy than when we took a quick peek on opening, yet still look the part. To start, a simple sweetcorn velouté is poured on to purple potatoes, smoked chicken and charred corn, and silky folds of pappardelle with steamed bass, mussels and a riot of pea shoots make a winning main. Linger over coffee, rather than dessert. The wine list is predictably flash, with limited room for manoeuvre under £30.

**Chef/s:** Aiden Byrne. **Meals:** main courses £12 to £40. Set L £23 (2 courses) to £28. **Details:** Bar.