

H●T DINNERS

Wiltons of St James' reopens with new oyster bar menu

You've got to sit up and take notice when a press release breezily describes a restaurant as 'older than America'. The establishment in question is Wiltons in St James' - a place that began life back in 1742 - a full 34 years before the creation of the United States of America - as a stall selling oysters, shrimps and cockles. It became a restaurant proper in 1840 and has been in its current location on Jermyn Street since the Orwellian year of 1984.

Why are we telling you all this? Well the old place has had a bit of a do-over and reopened for business this week. And while we're sure the intention wasn't to freak out the old guard of longstanding regulars, there are two big changes. The first is that you can now dine up at the reburbished oyster bar with a special bar menu rather than eating in the dining room. And from this weekend Wiltons will be open for the first time in its history on a Saturday for the dinner service only.

The new bar menu includes dishes such as Blythburgh pork crackling (£3.50), Glamorgan sausages with Laverbread mayonnaise (£7.50); foie gras with four spice crumb and Reisling jelly £17) as well as oysters every which way and a whole lot of blinis and caviar - all of which we frankly hope to be trying ourselves very shortly, so we'll be back with an account of that.

Wiltons is at 55 Jermyn Street, London SW1Y 6LX