

PINTS & PISTACHIOS

The best for eating and drinking
to your heart's content



Cliff and Norm had found
their new regular

ACES & EIGHTS, LONDON

156 Fortress Rd, NW5; acesandeightsaloonbar.com

With a retro *Street Fighter II* pinball machine, Fifties-inspired décor, a glorious variety of US beer and a pizza menu that caters for 10 different tongues – the Sapore d'Estate (£7.95) is a crustless delight – we predict this bourbon bar could well be your new regular haunt.

THE GREEN, LONDON

29 Clerkenwell Green, EC1; thegreencl.co.uk

At this artfully battered pub try the skirt steak with creamy mash, wild mushrooms and sweet onions; so gratifyingly manly it's served on a slab of wood (£12.90).



THE OLDE BELL, BERKSHIRE

High St, Hurley SL6; theoldebells.co.uk

Tucked away in glorious Hurley, this outstanding pub is one of Berkshire's best kept secrets. The menu changes daily, but we'd recommend the sea bream (£15.80).



THE OLD DAIRY, LONDON

1 Crouch Hill, N4; theolddairy4.co.uk

As you've no doubt guessed, this gastropub used to be a dairy. It's come a long way – try Falmouth Bay mussels (£7.50) then the West Devon lamb shank (£14).



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TELEVISION

Are TV executives really killing off creativity?

British director Ken Loach spoke out against them at the London Festival, but is he correct in his criticism? Two experts make their case



YES
Andrew
Pettie,
TV editor,

The Daily Telegraph Advertising revenues have plummeted for ITV and Channel 4 and the more pressure people are under, the fewer risks they take. The BBC is in the same position – to justify the licence fee, it needs ratings comparable to ITV's. The result is both *Strictly* and *The X Factor* clogging up the weekend schedules.

The problem is commissioning by formula. When *Big Brother* finished

Channel 4 needed a replacement. *Due Seven Days* (above). It was trumpeted as bold and innovative, and people tuned in, only to find it was just a tired docusoap. The ratings dropped.

When there is a big hit, it's in spite of the commissioning process. A good example is *Sherlock*. Only three parts were made and it was broadcast in August, which is a traditional dumping ground. But viewers loved it and now the bosses are taking credit, despite the fact they obviously didn't believe in it.



NO
Andy
Devonshire,
series

director, *The Apprentice* What you have to remember is that there are a lot of hours of television to fill every day. And there are hundreds of channels. You can't possibly have constant creativity. But it's the timing of Ken Loach's comments that's strange as they've come just after *This Is England '86* has been broadcast. That was an amazing piece of television.

But it drama. *The Sol* a feast of and visu was cha informat entertain while the on TV, th plenty of The a return like *The* that the formula stick to, that we' innovati structur with vis suchlike keep it i alive, the