

portal restaurant & bar

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Offering a combination of sophisticated Iberian cuisine, a specialist wine list and bold interior design, Portal is a modern European restaurant in Clerkenwell. Heavily inspired by Portuguese and French cooking, it manages to be both cutting edge while also retaining a traditional rustic style. It's run by Antonio Correia, former manager of Café du Marché, who has introduced modern Portuguese fare, coupled with an exceptional wine list. Antonio's vast knowledge of port led to his invitation to join the Royal Port Society and also his friendship with Pedro Branco of Quinta do Portal, the Portuguese wine-making company that supplies the restaurant and which also inspired its name.

Portal is housed in a former paint shop and warehouse dating back to the early 19th century in a building that is Grade II-listed. The original exterior has been retained and some of the building's former features – windows, shelves and floors – have been restored by Ken Mackay, designer of Ian Schrager's Sanderson and St Martin's Lane restaurants, and worked into the new interior, unifying the gap between old and new. Whilst the bar is housed in the original



part of the premises, the main restaurant spills back across sweeping floors and exposed vents into a glasshouse which, looking on to a spotlit brick wall, lends an al fresco feel to the premises. Bar and restaurant are linked by an open-plan kitchen situated in the centre of the building.

The menu focuses mainly on Portuguese dishes cooked in a French style. Reflecting

the expertise of head chef Rodrigo Ferreira Tiago, the menu presents a mixture of traditional dishes including Portuguese fish dishes such as Sea bass with a Bacalhau crust, sun-dried tomato and olive risotto, and John Dory with baby cuttlefish ravioli, as well as the more unfamiliar, such as braised Bisaro on a bed of broccoli and country bread. Starters could offer Asparagus consommé with crab ravioli and vegetable dumplings, or Smoked sardine terrine with tomato confit, while desserts include a two chocolate semi-cuit with wild fruits ice cream and saffron sauce or a Gazpacho of summer fruits with Portal ice cream.