

CitySolicitor

THE MAGAZINE OF THE CITY OF LONDON SOLICITORS' COMPANY AND THE CITY OF LONDON LAW SOCIETY

*“When we say ‘Yes’ to something
we are always saying ‘No’ to
something else. So in that way,
we never ‘don’t do’ anything.
We are just doing something else.”*

MALTI BHOJWANI, DON'T THINK OF A BLUE BALL



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editor's letter



Welcome to our summer edition of City Solicitor.

Typically, we have a distinctly European focus in this issue and, in a year that has already been laden with decision making, we took it all one step further and asked for a "yes" or a "no" from you as to our new look and feel magazine.

Here is what you said (no holds barred):

"The piece about Mark Pollock was inspiring."

"Excellent all round."

"My favourite section is what happens in the other side of a solicitor's brain."

"I like what's on in London and the interviews".

"Ronnie's car column is a hoot."

"Please include information about vacancies on Committees."

"Perhaps focus on or interview a different member of the Company each issue?"

"Remember that this is a means of communicating what CLLS does as a professional body."

Maybe you agree? Maybe not? We would love your feedback, pro or against, yes or no!

From our next issue we are dedicating an entire page to your thoughts, views, comments, ideas. Contact us on mail@citysolicitors.org.uk.

But back to Europe.

Post election (phew!) where are we?

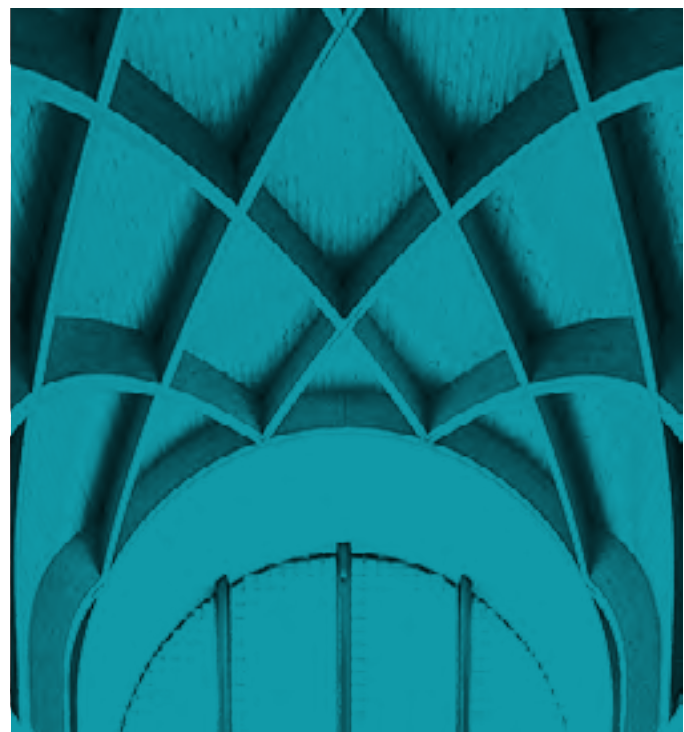
Read the articles on Europe in or out? and on the Common European Sales Law to see where a Community wide approach to legislation might lead. And make your own minds up.

And summer time is holiday time. For those of you who can escape, check out our Istanbul (is it or isn't it Europe? Does even geography have a yes or no opinion?) feature. But if you should be stuck in London, you can still escape. Read about a new restaurant opening that will transport you, albeit in mind and spirit, to the heart of Europe.

See you in Autumn where we will look to detox! Watch this space.

John Abramson, Editor





boilerplate

heron

non-sequitur

disclosure



The Common European Sales Law. Raising the bar? Dumbing down? Or just unnecessary meddling?



Buying and selling goods in the EU is not without its obstacles, the most notable being that with differing national contract laws in operation, cross border transactions can become more grey and complex than domestic ones.

That's certainly one school of thought. Others would say these issues are overplayed and what has been working very successfully for a long, long time shouldn't be tampered with. And what's more, with the internet, cross border transactions are increasingly becoming an everyday occurrence and a way of life.

In 2010, Viviane Reding, in her capacity as European Commissioner for Justice laid out the idea of a Common European Sales Law to simplify and clarify. At the time, amidst recession, anything that could improve trading was obviously enthusiastically received.

Five years on, where are we? It would seem nowhere. So how and why has this happened? And was it such a good idea to start with?

Following the publication of a Green Paper by the Commission, an impact assessment was instigated "to examine the nature and scale of the problems that differences in contract law posed for businesses and consumers in the EU and to analyse the policy options."

This impact assessment which should have determined premise and opinion has been criticised in that time periods were too brief and some would say that the people spoken to were not necessarily the right ones in that they focused on academics, rather than practitioners.

The truth is that this entire thought process began as early as 2001 as a largely academic exercise looking at contract law on a comparative basis and examining possible tools that would be required for any future convergence.

There were a whole host of objections to the consultation process and these were clearly set out in well thought through responses from the City of London Law Society and Law Society of England and Wales.

Others were that "if it ain't broke, why fix it?", that there would be huge cost and confusion arising from such a massive change and also the issue of subsidiarity.

Many questioned the actual need for it – especially when, for example, English contract law has been successfully operating for hundreds of years and French contract law since Roman times. The EU is clear in its view that it should only act when individual nations cannot do it themselves – and so in this instance, where there is a lack of a clear and uncontroversial legal basis, a whole new system of law seems completely unnecessary. There were further objections to the fact that there was no democratic mandate for this and, therefore, it would go against the fundamental principles of democracy that such a law should be imposed on the whole of Europe.

After the objections, the proposed draft Regulation was reduced in scope and made optional. This was met with similar disapproval on the same grounds and also further questioned the fairness of placing the onus on a consumer to know which law to go with.

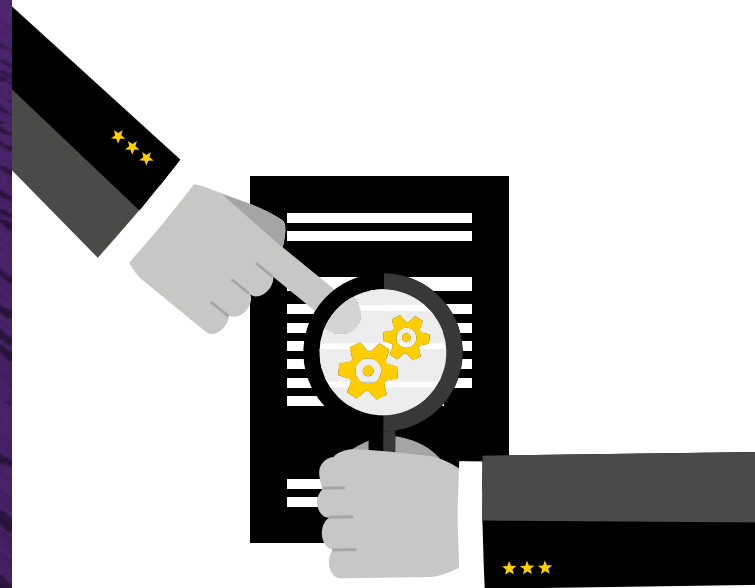


With the recession over, is there a serious need for such legislation now? Should it simply be dropped and a line drawn under the wasted resources? Consider how much time and money it has all taken getting to this point. There is still an intention to push on with a version of the proposal, albeit something focused just on online consumers which aims at "unleashing the potential of e-commerce in a digital single market".

An indication of what this might be was provided by a Communication in May 2015, in which the Commission set out its aim to make a legislative proposal by the end of the year. This envisages harmonised rules for online purchases of digital content and allowing traders to rely on their national laws based on a set of mandatory EU contractual rights in the context of domestic and cross-border online sales of tangible goods. Other than the apparent focus on online consumers we do not know precisely what this new proposal will entail, so there is a large dose of scepticism as to its usefulness and it could be seen by some as a way of sneaking in the CESL through the back door.

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“MANY QUESTIONED THE ACTUAL NEED FOR IT — ESPECIALLY WHEN ENGLISH CONTRACT LAW HAS BEEN SUCCESSFULLY OPERATING FOR OVER A THOUSAND YEARS.”



The City of London Law Society Commercial Law Committee is a group of pre-eminent commercial lawyers covering a pretty widespread spectrum of firms from the usual suspects to smaller more niche players.

Three of its members Oliver Bray (RPC), Jon Bartley (Penningtons Manches) and Richard Marke (Bates Wells & Braithwaite) were happy to discuss their views on CESL, past, present and future.

They didn't mince their words.

“It's a sledgehammer being used to crack the wrong nut” said Bray. This was echoed by Bartley who likened the situation to a Swiss cheese when the proposal first came into existence but now the holes are being filled in by other legislation there is no longer a separate need for it.

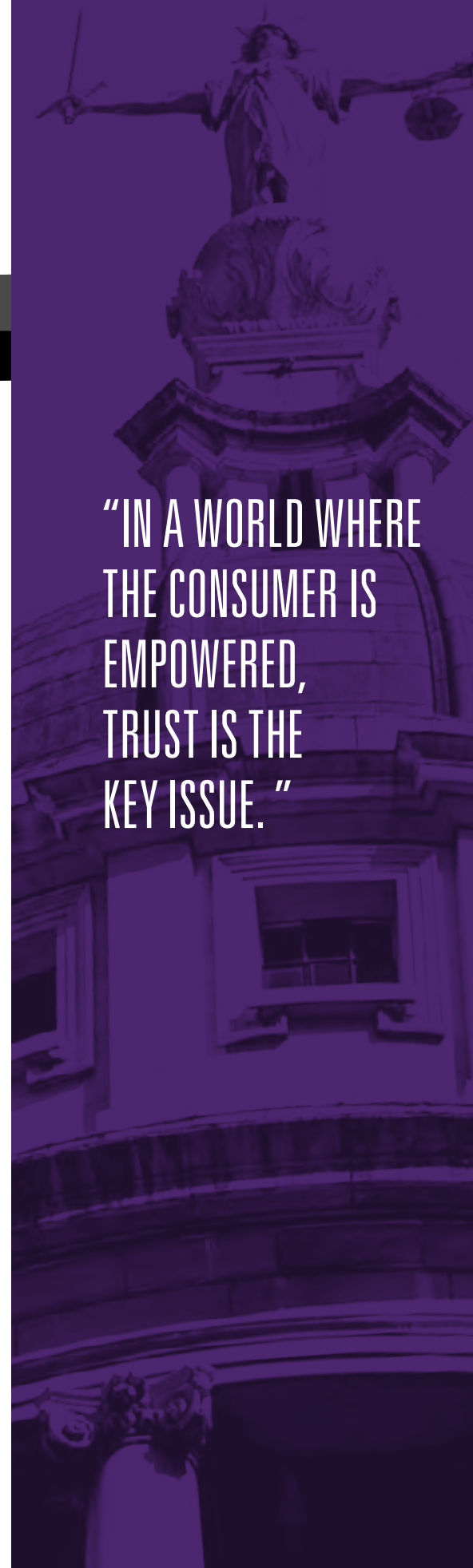
Bray said whilst nobody could disagree with the general principle of it “on a skinny and superficial level” just one slight scratch of the surface would show it to be “riddled with flaws”.

In his view, 28 states have been managing very well for hundreds of years in their contract law, therefore where was the need for a 29th with no jurisprudence?

Marke pointed out that many of the originally perceived barriers between member states trading simply no longer exist in the world we live in today with consumers readily transacting online every single day to book hotels, cars and flights etc.

He believes that whilst there are barriers to cross border trade still, it is not the law that is causing the problem but language, currency and other issues completely separate from contract law. The way that brands deal with pricing, refunds, dispute resolution and cancellation are the things that really count.

“IN A WORLD WHERE THE CONSUMER IS EMPOWERED, TRUST IS THE KEY ISSUE.”



They all believe a “degree of harmonisation” must be a good thing in principle but that the proposals delivered thus far have not been properly thought through and there are too many down sides to them.

They spoke of the Consumer Rights Directive which has already successfully dealt with cancellation rights and more is coming this October which in itself is eating away at a need for a CESL in any form.

In a world where the consumer is “empowered”, trust is the key issue.

How can someone in Sussex have the confidence to buy a piece of furniture from a carpenter outside of the UK advertising online?

But trust isn't gained by ticking a box about unread Terms and Conditions; trust today is earned by what fellow consumers have experienced and share. A seal of approval is worth way more than any legislation. A favourable Trip Advisor review, for example, arguably has more impact than the existence of strict legal rights. And of course none of this existed when the CESL concept was first dreamt of.

Bray believes that “in 2015 a looser, flexible more modern framework” makes a lot more sense than anything a CESL can offer.

Mickael Laurans, Head of the UK Law Societies Joint Brussels Office, outlined the Law Society of England and Wales' view that “proposals presented thus far could not have satisfied the original objective of increased cross border activity but rather potentially created huge problems through legal uncertainty and eating away at consumer rights so it was best not to go ahead.”The optional version particularly raised problems as to its relationship with national law and how it would be interpreted in each state. He says it would take years and years to develop case law so in the interim there would be uncertainty and that would be harmful.

Even without going into the specific provisions of the proposals Laurans believes there were so many problematic legal issues which highlighted why it was a bad idea. He remains open minded about the next proposal to see whether it is better suited to meet the objectives.

But what does this whole process say about EU law-making? It seems to have come out of nowhere, as if dreamt up in isolation from real market needs. It has been costly due to consultation and argument. And after so many years, there is still nothing to show for it. Just an awful lot of very frustrated lawyers. CS

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EX-PARTE

P R I V I L E G E C L U B

THIS SEASON

If we are talking Europe, wine has to be involved. So, this season one of our exclusive offers is all about the grape. Indulge!

London's best independent wine merchant is right here in the City.

Treat yourself to 15% off* any retail wine purchases at:

- Leadenhall Bar
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- Holborn Shop & Tasting Cellar

Visit www.planetofthegrapes.co.uk for venue details and simply quote your Ex Parte number when purchasing.

*Offer ends 21st August 2015.



Artloop

Our second Ex Parte exclusive is a very special invitation to a new art show in London, Artloop.

Art should be shared with as many as possible.

That is what Artloop exists to achieve.

Not housed in the traditional Mayfair spaces, nor part of the new uber cool (and sometimes equally intimidating) East London brigade, it is a white space filled over and over with beautiful pieces. Sometimes a collective, sometimes a single artist and sometimes a theme. Always full of bright ideas.

Based in Camden in a stunning building that was once the home of Angels and Bermans and where the Star Wars costumes were originally created.

It is now occupied by Sparkloop, a branding and design agency, and the shows will take place amidst their workspace.

An initial private view will be followed by an open invitation to one and all to just pop in and look at the art whilst Sparkloop work. Nobody to hassle the viewer, just the space to enjoy the art.

Every exhibit will be fully catalogued and referenced on Sparkloop's microsite, Artloop and supported with marketing tools such as posters, online PDF invites and social media.

Ex Parte members are invited to the first private view on July 15th. The first collective will feature works by Dani Humberstone, Larry Vigon, Tamsin Relly, Kay Jones, Alison Trask, Adam Hargreaves and many, many more.

Please e-mail artloop@sparkloop.com quoting your Ex Parte number for your exclusive invite – plus a £100 off voucher should you purchase a work of art.

EUROPE

IN? OR OUT?

Nigel Farage describes the EU as: "an ageing, declining ailing part of the world economy" and the UK "could do better" as an independent nation – trading with the "enormous English speaking diaspora" worldwide.

He says...

"A vote for UKIP is a vote to leave the EU and recover power over our national life."

"Regain control of our borders and of immigration – only possible by leaving the EU."

"Save £55m a day in membership fees by leaving the EU."

But does the country agree with him? Do they believe his "facts"?

Despite Farage himself not being re-elected, 3.7 million people chose to vote for UKIP with its anti EU agenda and now with a majority Tory government in place, we can now be sure that there will be a referendum by 2017 to decide whether we remain in the EU.

Bizarrely, having canvassed many, many lawyers for their opinion, not a single one came forward to support leaving.

However, many had a lot to say about the pros of staying.

John Davies, a partner at Freshfields, has no doubts whatsoever that "the future for the UK and so for my children and my grandchildren, if I have them, will be more assured if the UK is a part of a large economic and political block within an inevitably globalised world."

Davies firmly believes that the economy would take a huge hit if the UK were to leave the EU.

We "are very much in danger of sleepwalking into an economic nightmare."

He talks of the Norwegian option which is often cited as a successful way forward but points out that what many don't know is the huge amount of money that Norway have to pay in order to be allowed access to the single market. Nor that they have to abide to most of EU legislation, which they are simply sent as a directive with no ability to input or question.

He says our ability to trade will be hugely compromised and likened it to "having a row with a golf club because you don't agree with their dress code. If you lose the vote you can't then expect to carry on playing golf at that club for free. You would have to pay green fees. Or you may even be ostracised. That is what would happen to the UK. We are kidding ourselves if we think otherwise."

Banks regulated in the UK can operate throughout Europe. If we left the EU, that wouldn't be the case. So, banks may choose to relocate which obviously would have huge repercussions.

The same applies to the huge Japanese motoring manufacturing companies who choose to be in the UK because of the cultural and linguistic advantages that affords when trading within Europe. Again, leaving the EU could cause them to rethink.

As a single country, Davies believes we would not be in a strong bargaining position in global trade negotiation. What would we have to offer?

He also opposes the belief that being in the EU is somehow giving up our sovereignty but sees us pooling, affording a stronger pot as a result with much greater political weight on the global stage than any single country could ever have.

He talks of the entity originally being created after the war not for economic purposes but to stop Europeans from going to war which they had done on a mass scale, not once but twice, in the previous 50 years.

The union has been hugely successful in guaranteeing that security. When the French fishermen blockaded ports, that was the sort of behaviour that used to cause wars. Now, the outrage is discussed. Countries within the union are talking all the time and as Davies quite rightly says, "it's hard to go to war when you are talking. We must not lose sight that this talking stopped what happened for centuries before."

He says the rest of Europe not only want the UK to stay but to lead. Going back to the golf club analogy, Davies says: "Why would you want one of your best golfers to leave? It raises the game by having them." The spin of the media and UKIP that we are not wanted is "palpably not true".



Davies is equally vociferous on the hugely sensitive subject of free movement amongst workers. He says one thing UKIP never mention is not just those entering the UK – but those choosing to leave it. Over three million Brits live in other countries within the EU. If we exit, they become aliens without any rights to stay.

He believes most people who come into the UK choose to do so because they "want to get off their backsides and earn a living". They are "desperate to work" and they DO pay taxes as they are obviously deducted at source. "Most people who come here aren't looking for benefits, but looking for work."

Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales have all benefited from cash injections through being in the union. This money which enabled such huge improvements like rebuilding Belfast might have had to come from Westminster if it had not come directly from central funds. Gibraltar too would suffer if the UK were to exit. The open border with Spain would be no more and Gibraltar would be cut off from the rest of Europe.

Davies says to leave the union would mean a two year period of negotiations to unravel something that took over 50 years to build. It would be a "disorderly exit" and would cause "significant uncertainty". He says it "certainly won't be all right on the night as we will be negotiating with zero tools" and are very much in danger of "sleepwalking into an economic nightmare".

Michael Payton, QC (Hon) and Chairman of Clyde & Co LLP, says the three arguments given in favour of leaving the union are all flawed.



The first centres around the euro – and the perceived disaster that it has proven to be. Payton believes if there were a clean slate now, nobody would do it and praises Gordon Brown for coming up with the "five point test" which he knew could not be satisfied. It left us with the best of all worlds i.e being a part of the union without being included in the euro. So, the existence of the euro simply plays no part in whether we should exit.

"If we sock the EU in the mouth, why on earth should they bother with us?"

The second is about the Human Rights Convention. He cites the example of prisoners votes as demonstrating how the UK can and has held its own so proving we can disagree and stay within the union.

Lastly, regulation by Brussels. Payton believes that "the health and safety mania is as alive in the UK as it is in Brussels" and if the regulation were removed "nothing would change". So, yet another argument removed.

Like Davies, Payton warns of the economic threats we would face if we were to exit. His office overlooks an array of buildings housing the biggest insurance companies from all over the world. He says they are the single most successful industry in the UK and sees London as having huge significance as a springboard into European territories. Payton believes that if we left the union, there is a danger they would leave too.

He talks too of Japanese car manufacturers who are attracted to the UK because we are a part of the union.

Payton sees no upside to us leaving, just downside. Why should we give it up? "Nobody has any idea of the huge consequences of removing ourselves from a major trading block. But once the genie is out of the lamp, there is no way back. And if we sock the EU in the mouth, why on earth should they bother with us?"

Why indeed?

Churchill recognised how trading benefits from working within unions rather than unilaterally. Even Eurosceptic Thatcher agreed there would be huge economic benefit to a Union. But now with a Tory backbench of Eurosceptics rumoured to be numbered in the three figures, who can say what the outcome of the referendum will be? CS



East/West? Europe/Asia? Old/New? Yes/ No?



Not many cities can boast that they are both in Europe and in Asia. Yet that is precisely true of Istanbul, and not just geographically.



Crossing the Bosphorus will take you from one continent to the other, but on both sides and alongside each other is an unexpectedly rich fusion of cultures, religions, architecture, art, fashion – in short, life.

For a first time visitor, be warned the driving is definitely more Eastern than Western. There seems to be no concept of a speed limit and drivers weave in and out seemingly recklessly and fearlessly to reach their destination without ever stopping unless forced to.

Soho House have just opened a new hotel in a converted palazzo and truthfully there is no better way to first behold the beauty of the city than to sit on the rooftop bar sipping a cocktail and watching the sun set.

It's a pretty amazing space to stay too. Rooms are in a newly built space adjacent to the palazzo and luxuriously comfortable with thoughtful homely touches like an espresso machine, radio, books, magazines and hair straighteners. You don't even need to pack any toiletries whatsoever as the rooms are full of the delicious smelling Cowshed products (the House's own brand).

No trip to Istanbul should leave out a visit to the Grand Bazaar. 61 streets with over 3000 shops. Quite an assault on the senses with the myriad of colours, smells, and a frenzy of people – the bazaar attracts up to 400,000 people daily.

The most important lesson to learn about everything in Istanbul is the deeper you delve, the better it becomes.



Above: The Grand Bazaar, Istanbul.

*“the deeper you delve,
the better it becomes.”*

Shops selling delicious “lokum” (Turkish delight) have their cheap stuff on the outside stalls and the really exquisitely delicious produce (like ones covered in rose petals, or crammed full with the plumpest pistachios) hidden right at the back of the store.

This lesson is true of the bazaar itself. The first shops you encounter are full of tacky souvenirs but as you go further in and eventually reach Bedesten, then you find yourself amidst some beautiful treasures.

Absolutely not to be missed is Nick's Calligraphy shop. Not the easiest to find as it's not clearly marked but step in and you know it was worth the hunt.

Nick himself is always there and guides you through his library of work. His art is made directly onto dried leaves and features calligraphy of quotations displayed in deep blacks alongside vibrant colours. President Bush bought one. Probably his best ever move. Nick even has a piece of art he made especially for lawyers.



Above: Istanbul is famous for its rich variety of spices.

The quotation reads

"to judge one hour with justice is more blessed than to worship for a year".

When you have shopped till you dropped, stop and have a delicious Turkish coffee at the Fes Cafe. Each cup comes in a beautiful tray with its own copper pot, a beautiful water glass, a piece of lokum and even a little vase of flowers.



Above: Fes Cafe serves coffee with a little bit extra.

Another Istanbul must do is a trip to a hammam. Like with all else you can pick traditional or modern, expensive or cheap, quiet or busy.

For a very tranquil and modern option, try Kilic Ali Pasa. It is stunning. A very beautiful building that is immaculately presented and has the most serene aura. Visitors are greeted with a refreshing quince juice before an hour of superlative cleansing and massage commence. You will never feel cleaner.

Food is delicious throughout Istanbul with street sellers offering corn on the cobs and chestnuts everywhere. Restaurants offering traditional fare are abundant. Try Pim Karakoy, a wonderfully trendy cafe with some vibrant art and the best falafel and baba ganoush you will ever eat.

Fish is fabulous in Istanbul and the restaurants at the waterfront are plentiful and offer a huge variety although they are a tad formal and expensive – and fish tends to be served just plain with a lettuce leaf and a boiled potato!

For something a little more sophisticated try Munferit. The seabass is sublime and the passion fruit martini very, very moreish.

So, whether you fancy a trip to Asia or Europe, modern or traditional setting, a frenetic or quiet weekend, city or waterfront, have it all in Istanbul. CS



Left: A piece of art that focuses on the value of law. Right: Nick's Calligraphy is known all over the globe.



Above: Turkish delights at the Bazaar.

"You can pick traditional or modern, expensive or cheap, quiet or busy."



Above: A bridge between old and new.



Above: Sunset from the new Soho house, Istanbul.

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 +90 212 377 71 00

Grand Bazaar, Beyazit

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Fes Cafe, Süleymaniye Mh
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Restaurant review:

LOVE, HAPPINESS AND PADRÓN PEPPERS



They say all the great love affairs start with chance encounters. That is certainly true of my ongoing and ever increasing passion for José Pizarro. And when I say José Pizarro I mean the food, the restaurants, the books, the entire brand and, yes, the man.

We came out of White Cube full of argument about the virtues or otherwise of the Tracey Emin exhibit we had just seen. With an hour to kill before our dinner reservation, fate drew us through the doors of tapas bar, José, on Bermondsey Street. The place was crammed full but we were warmly greeted by someone who introduced himself as Jack and who found us a place at the bar where we ordered some sherry. Jack insisted we have some padrón peppers as well and one sip and one bite later, I knew there was no going back.

A couple of weeks later I was taking a client out for lunch in the same area so jumped at the opportunity to try the restaurant version a few doors down, Pizarro.

Feels more Barcelona than Broadgate.

It was amazing. Delicious food. Excellent wines. Genuinely friendly, relaxed, and very, very Bermondsey. So on trend, but without being in any way contrived or self-conscious or pretentious. Cool, chilled but definitely not cold.

So when I heard a third was opening (this time called José Pizarro, having exhausted all combinations could there ever be a 4th?), I was a tad amazed to see that it was located in Broadgate Circle. For anyone who hasn't visited yet, the PR says; "London's latest dining hub, Broadgate Circle, brings a dynamic food and drink offering to the City with a diverse collection of restaurants, cafes, bars and street food traders." In my mind a sort of upmarket equivalent of the plethora of places you get around multiplex cinemas.

So, had Mr Pizarro sold out? Was he trading in his relaxed establishments and mouthwatering food for overpriced fare in corporate environments?

With some trepidation, we arrived at midday and walked into the most beautifully designed space. The main feature is an open kitchen behind a very long bar which feels more Barcelona than Broadgate Circle. There is a lot of grey painted exposed piping, marble and steel – harsh industrial features that are miraculously soft and welcoming. And sensitively combined with what could be clichéd terracotta wine racks, aged hams hanging from the ceiling and bleached wood. It's stunning. But in no way intimidating. The place as yet devoid of customers was buzzing with staff; all young, friendly, chatty. They greeted us as though we had entered their home, not their place of work. Dita, the manager, suggested we sit at the bar where we could watch the chefs in action. A good half a dozen of them, each performing his particular duty; some cutting the precious ham (by hand, not by machine), others frying duck eggs, all calm and content; it looked almost like choreographed dance. The restaurant also has a long high table which guests share, some more intimate small tables which would be perfect for a quiet dinner and also outside seating. I had already decided to return many times at different times and sit somewhere different each time.

Helena who brought us sparkling water (sadly, an afternoon of work ahead meant no alcohol) and menus told us the place also opens for breakfast. Reasons to return were piling up fast and furious. Wow, did we struggle. We wanted everything. Sensing our dilemma, a stunningly suited and very charming man came to our rescue. He introduced himself as Victor Calvente, the Operations Manager for the Group. We decided to simply let Victor do the ordering, and he was happy to do so.

The first thing to arrive were the most enormous green Gardol olives. They were stuffed with white anchovies and had a garlicky chilli kick. Then the padrón peppers served with Cornish sea salt. My weak spot. The Jamón Ibérico was nothing short of sensational. You could taste the nuttiness of the acorns. Prawn fritters with saffron aioli were firm and I thought we were going to fight over the last one. The croquettes caseras were made with chorizo and were so light you would swear they didn't have one calorie in them. I wish!

Even though by this point we were full, we just couldn't resist carrying on.



It was now 1:15pm and the restaurant was completely full too and despite the fact the wind was blowing and it was intermittently raining, the outside space was also jam packed with people happy to brave the weather if it meant a taste of the sublime. Optimists who hadn't booked were turning up at the door only to be disappointed. Word had spread fast. The place only opened a week ago.

We shared two more dishes. The asparagus 'a la plancha' which came with a fried duck's egg and romesco sauce and as an added bonus (this part wasn't on the menu) two delicious slices of cheese with honey.

Next was the grilled octopus with baby potatoes and JP's Pimenton and arbequina olive oil. I have never tasted octopus like it. We almost licked the plate clean.

Next to us, a man was dining alone. We got chatting. He lives in SE1 and is a frequent visitor to the two Bermondsey Street venues. This was his second visit to this new venture and looking at the delicious plate of pan fried chicken livers that he made disappear like someone from the Magic Circle, I could see why.

At this point, when I thought the whole experience could get no better, Mr Pizarro himself appeared and started mingling with his guests and making sure everyone was happy. He is the MOST utterly delightful man, certain celebrity chefs would do well to take a leaf (or ten) out of his book. He told us how really excited he was to be opening in the City because "City people know exactly what they want. They know about jamon. They demand quality, simplicity and good value for money. Which is what I want to give them." Mr Pizarro believes that something like his new restaurant is what has hitherto been missing in the City. He says the reason it is so full is because there "is no attitude; just happiness".

He even managed to persuade us to have dessert saying we had to try one that was inspired by his grandmother. What arrived was chocolate with olive oil and salt on toast. Honestly. I don't think I have ever eaten anything more delicious. A perfect espresso ended our meal but I knew this love affair was only ever going to get stronger and stronger.

As Mr Pizarro so aptly put it, to experience his restaurant is simply "happiness". Do your very best to get a reservation. CS



JOSÉ PIZARRO (BROADGATE)	JOSÉ TAPAS BAR	PIZARRO RESTAURANT
36 BROADGATE CIRCLE EC2M 1QS	104 BERMONDSEY STREET SE1 3UB	194 BERMONDSEY STREET SE1 3TQ
Monday to Friday 7am – 11pm Saturday 11am – 11pm	Monday to Saturday 12pm – 10:15pm Sunday 12pm – 5:15pm	Monday to Sunday 12pm – 10:15pm*



What we've been up to

A diary of our Livery events.

The highlight of our calendar, the Annual Banquet, took place on 14th April in the spectacular surroundings of the Mansion House. We were delighted to be hosted by our own Past Master, Alderman Sir David Wootton, as Lord Mayor Locum Tenens and to welcome our guest speaker for the evening, Patricia O'Brien, Irish Ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva. CS



THE MASTER & WARDENS



GUESTS



GUESTS



THE GUEST SPEAKER, AMBASSADOR PATRICIA O'BRIEN



GUESTS



THE GUARD OF HONOUR FROM THE COMPANY'S CADETS, THE 71ST DETACHMENT OF THE LONDON IRISH RIFLES



THE CIVIC PARTY PROCESSION



THE MASTER, ALDERMAN VINCENT KEAVENY



THE CEREMONY OF THE LOVING CUP



THE MAGNIFICENT EGYPTIAN HALL

PHOTOS: GERALD SHARP PHOTOGRAPHY

THE 2015 ANNUAL BANQUET



FOX VISITS A WORLD-FAMOUS CAR COLLECTION

The most appreciative individual client for whom I have acted is a fellow motor enthusiast. He invited me to join him on a visit to the renowned Louwman Museum in The Hague.

In 1924 Pieter Louwman started importing Dodge cars from the United States. Over the years, his company expanded and became a significant car distributor, acquiring franchises to import brands such as Alfa Romeo, Chrysler, Morgan and DeSoto – and even Ferguson tractors. In 1964 the business became the first distributor of Toyota cars in the European Community when it was appointed Toyota importer for the Netherlands.

The Louwman car collection began in 1934 with the purchase of a 20 year-old Dodge. Today the collection consists of over two hundred and fifty antique and classic motor cars. The current owner of the collection is the son of Pieter Louwman, Ewert, who greeted us on the day of our unforgettable visit. The collection is housed in a magnificent building designed by an American architect, Michael Graves, and formally opened by Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands in 2010.

The Louwman family has assembled a truly magnificent collection of interesting cars, motorcycles, bicycles, and carriages. A particular feature is that many of the vehicles remain in their original state with the patina of a century of use; as a matter of policy, cars in original condition are preferred by the Museum to heavily restored models.

I was particularly impressed by a battered 1936 Toyota AA believed to be the oldest Toyota car in existence. In 2008 the Louwman Museum succeeded in tracking down an example of the very first Toyota model languishing in a barn near Vladivostok. The paintwork is faded and the windows are cracked: nonetheless the car on display is hugely important in the history of motoring. I was assured that the Toyota car company in Japan were more than a little jealous when Mr Louwman found an example of the car for which they themselves had been searching for many years.

The Museum has some spectacularly beautiful cars. Amongst my favourites are:

- a reproduction 1886 Benz Patent car – widely regarded as the first useable car;
- a 1903 Spyker model which was the first car in the world with a six cylinder engine, the first petrol-driven car with four wheel drive and the first car with four wheel braking;
- the 1904 Darracq which starred in the 1953 film 'Genevieve' and is regularly seen in the London to Brighton veteran car run;
- the 1910 Brooke Swan Car owned for over 70 years by the family of the Maharaja of Nabha (complete with electric bulbs in the swan's eyes that glow in the dark, an exhaust-driven, eight-tone Gabriel horn and a swan's beak linked to the engine's cooling system which allows the driver to spray steam to clear a passage in the streets);
- a Rolls-Royce Phantom 1 built in 1926 for the of the Nawab of Hyderabad and regularly used for carrying visiting members of the British Royal Family;
- a 1952 Jaguar XK 120 generally accepted as one of the most beautiful sports cars of all time;
- the 1954 Humber Pullman owned by Sir Winston Churchill fitted with an extra-large ashtray to cope with his cigars;
- an original gadget-laden 1964 Aston Martin DB5 used by James Bond in the film, Goldfinger; and
- the 1976 Cadillac Fleetword customised for Elvis Presley.

If you have any interest in cars, a visit to the Louwman Museum is a great experience. CS

Past Master Ronnie Fox is the Motoring Correspondent of City Solicitor



EUROPE

Was it complacency, hubris or pernicious hope that saw world leaders attend the opening of the Peace Palace less than a year before the outbreak of the First World War?

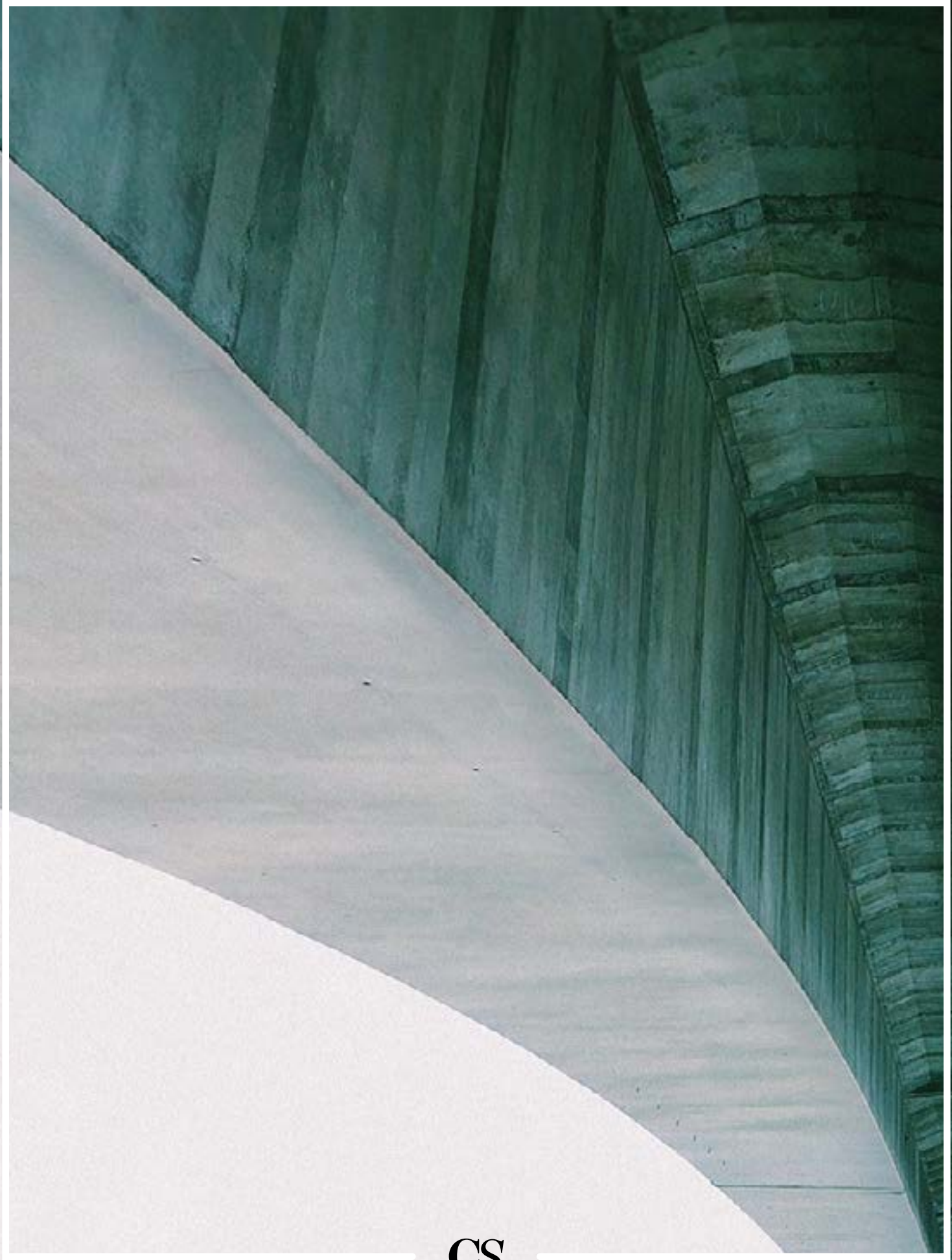
On 28 August 1913, the Peace Palace, the new home of the International Court of Justice and the Permanent Court of Arbitration, was opened in The Hague. Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia exactly 11 months later. By the first anniversary of the opening of the Peace Palace, a complex web of treaties had dragged most of Europe into war.

The Peace Palace, along with the home of the League of Nations in Geneva (the Palace of Nations), epitomises Europe's utopian optimism for peace and cooperation in the face of a world bent on conflict and destruction.

Is the cynic justified by the fact that the Peace Palace couldn't prevent the First World War and the Palace of Nations was impotent in the face of forces that would culminate in the Second World War? Or does the optimist win out, given that both buildings survived those cataclysmic conflicts and continue to play a vital role in international diplomacy and law?

CS

This article was provided courtesy of Ian Curry
www.vaguelyinteresting.co.uk



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