



Photo: Emli Bendixen

Petter Larsson blows his weekly food budget on a dining experience in the overground's secret underworld

Most students wouldn't spend 50 quid on a dinner. Even if we're talking about a dinner including drinks, art and secret adventures, 50 quid is a lot - on the first Thursday of every month you can do an east London gallery crawl and get all of that for free. Still, Gingerline is something every Londoner should try once.

The popular collaboration between artists, chefs and entertainers that started last year gets sold out quickly so we had to book a few weeks in advance. The many days of excited waiting also made the £50 feel better spent since it then wasn't only about one night. The "Ginger Line" is slang for the East London Overground, which is orange-coloured on the tube map, and we were asked to wait somewhere near it on the night of our booking.



Photo: Petter Larsson

The entrance is tricky for tall people

What? Artists, chefs and actors creating one of London's most unique dining experiences.

Where? Near a station on the East London Overground Line.

How? You get the directions in a text at 6pm the day you have booked for.

Booking? A few weeks in advance at gingerline.info/

Damage? £50 per person.

Worth it? Definitely, if you want an evening to remember as something more than just dinner and drinks.

At 6pm we get a text about which station to get to and after finishing our drinks at the quirky Shoreditch basement bar Ninetyeight we get on the Ginger Line to the secret venue.

We open a black door a few metres outside the station and have to duck to enter the pop-up restaurant through a little Alice in Wonderland-style tunnel.

Coming up through the floor in a smoke shadow, we find ourselves at our destination. Waitresses dressed as fairies greet us with a welcome drink before the dreamlike evening starts. The fairies force the 50 guests to howl at a moon that is projected on the wall. After looking nervously at our table neighbours, we all unite in a howl and later in more games throughout the night. The man in the moon is the night's toastmaster and talks us through four courses of experimental food, cocktails, wine, entertainment and toast competitions.

Above: Gingerline's actors make the dinner free from awkward silences. Below: Friendships at the long table.



Photo: Steph Bosset

I can't tell you the location or menu - the event is so secret its visitors can't even take the obligatory Instagram picture of the food - but the meal contained ingredients such as white bean and truffle dip, chamomile dressing, sumac-spiced carrot and rabbit.

Since we all got there with no idea of what was going to happen it wasn't hard to make new friends along the long tables we were seated at. Rather than being just a dinner, Ginger Line takes you on an evening's visit to a secret magical world. And since 50 quid won't get you much further than Stansted, it is money well spent.