



Since it opened six years ago, The Tea Box has become a local institution. Co-owners Jemma Swallow and Mike de Souza (3) are celebrating St George's Day with an afternoon tea. The couple met by chance on a bike ride along the river at Richmond. 'Mike had a business plan for a cafe and I always wanted a tea house and that's how The Tea Box was born,' says Jemma.



We've been in Richmond since....2007. Richmond (1) attracts a diverse audience. It has the history and attracts tourists, but also a lot of educated clientele and eccentric tea drinkers live here too.

We love Richmond because... It's where we met. But also the friendly people, the park, boutique shops, entertainment, the fact that it's steeped in history and the wonderful village feel.

When I'm away from Richmond I miss...Our cat Nero and a cup of our Yunnan tea. It's a black Chinese tea renowned for its health properties and lowering cholesterol.

Our favourite place to dine out in Richmond is ...The marvellous



Richmond attracts a diverse audience. It has history and attracts tourists as well as eccentric tea drinkers!

Al Boccon Di'vino (2), an Italian restaurant in Red Lion Street. We pay for a set menu and you don't know what food you are going to get; the owner Riccardo creates a wonderful atmosphere. We also like the Thai Elephant right opposite the bus station. Their red curry is simply amazing.

You can't beat the tea and cakes in Richmond at...The Tea Box! (4) Our most popular teas are Moroccan Mint and Thai latte made from fresh herbs. Our favourite cake is Mike's mum's carrot cake which she makes for us.

What we wouldn't change about Richmond is ... The independent shops, we love them.

What we would change about Richmond is...The parking and make it more affordable. Or the high street; it's a dramatic idea but we wish they would cover it with a glass roof for rainy days!

When the rugby is on in Richmond you will fine us... Shopping. The café is very busy in the morning with breakfasts before the game but in the afternoon the shops are empty and it's a blissful time to go for a browse and a potter in Richmond. Mike often goes to the rugby too and you will find him in the Ales & Tails pub in York Street, Twickenham, before (and after!) the game.

◆ Afternoon Teas and High Teas start from £17.50. The Tea Box, 7 Paradise Road, TW9 1RX; 020 8940 3521; theteabox.co.uk