# Chick ‘n’ Sours to close all London restaurants amid casual dining crisis



Chick ‘n’ Sours, a trendy Korean fried chicken chain that carved its niche in London's bustling fast-food scene, has made the heart-wrenching decision to shut all its restaurants after a decade of service. The company's closure, which affects its remaining locations in Haggerston and Seven Dials, marks a significant moment for both fans and the broader dining landscape. Co-founder David Wolanski announced the impending closure, revealing that the operational model of casual dining has become untenable. In a poignant Instagram post, he expressed: “We hung in there as long as we could, but I’m afraid we’ve now reached the point where operating the two restaurants just isn’t viable anymore” — a sentiment that resonates with many in the hospitality sector facing post-pandemic challenges.

Founded by David Wolanski and Carl Clarke, Chick ‘n’ Sours transformed from a once-modest presence at the Latitude Festival to a culinary destination celebrated for its inventive fried chicken dishes. Customers became enamoured with its bold flavours, innovative uses of ingredients, and a unique dining atmosphere. The original Haggerston restaurant often served as a cultural touchpoint, rejuvenating the area with its vibrant menu and adventurous spirit. Its previous enhancements, including a late-night bar named Sub Culture, had aimed to further enrich the dining experience, showcasing a dynamic selection of cocktails and themed events rooted in rave and punk culture.

However, the cumulative impact of economic pressures and evolving consumer habits has starkly affected casual dining establishments. With increasing costs and competition within London’s dining scene, the business landscape for independent restaurants has become exceptionally difficult. Wolanski urged patrons to support other small businesses similarly struggling, stating, “Remember, there are so many awesome independent restaurants out there doing great things but finding it tough out there also.” His appeal highlights the precarious position of many hospitality operators who are striving to survive amidst an uncertain economic climate.

While Chick ‘n’ Sours has closed its physical doors, it may still be accessible to its loyal fanbase through delivery platforms like Deliveroo. The restaurant's famed dishes could return to public consciousness at UK festivals and live music events, catering to an audience yearning for the vibrant experiences once offered. This pivot suggests a potential adaptation rather than a complete exit from the culinary scene. Other acquisitions or rebrandings within the fast-food sector, such as the emergence of the quick-service spinoff, Chik'n, transitioning to Chicken Shop in partnership with Soho House Group, illustrate the industry's ongoing evolution and the necessity for innovation in a challenging market.

In this context, the closure of Chick 'n' Sours serves as both a cautionary tale and a reminder of the vigor that once defined London's independent food scene. As the city’s culinary fabric bears the weight of change, the future of dining may very well hinge on how restaurants can adapt to both market pressures and consumer tastes.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2061867/chick-n-sours-closes-london), [[2]](https://www.thecaterer.com/news/original-chick-n-sours-closes-temporarily-for-refurb)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2061867/chick-n-sours-closes-london), [[3]](https://london.eater.com/2018/4/19/17255974/chick-n-sours-sub-culture-fried-chicken-pioneers-refurbishment-dalston)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://london.eater.com/2018/4/19/17255974/chick-n-sours-sub-culture-fried-chicken-pioneers-refurbishment-dalston), [[4]](https://www.restaurantonline.co.uk/Article/2022/04/05/Quick-service-spinoff-of-Chick-n-Sours-CHIK-N-to-rebrand-as-Chicken-Shop-with-multiple-openings-planned)
* Paragraph 4 – [[5]](https://www.timeout.com/london/news/chick-n-sours-is-back-londons-fried-chicken-institution-is-now-delivering-052620), [[6]](https://www.standard.co.uk/topic/chicken-restaurant)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2061867/chick-n-sours-closes-london> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.thecaterer.com/news/original-chick-n-sours-closes-temporarily-for-refurb> - The original Chick 'n' Sours restaurant in London's Haggerston closed for six weeks starting 22 April 2025 for refurbishment and the creation of a new downstairs bar named Sub Culture. Co-founder Carl Clarke aimed to enhance the dining experience by introducing a late-night bar serving cocktails and beers, inspired by rave and punk culture. The expansion increased the restaurant's capacity from 35 to 65 covers. The new menu, launched upon reopening in June, featured dishes like kimchi pancakes with fried chicken and Chengdu buffalo sauce, along with a new Jamaican lager called Jamrok, created in collaboration with Horace Panter from The Specials. Chick 'n' Sours also operates a second location in London's Seven Dials, opened in 2016, and launched the 'guilt-free' fast-food brand Chik'n in Baker Street last year, with plans for further expansion. ([thecaterer.com](https://www.thecaterer.com/news/original-chick-n-sours-closes-temporarily-for-refurb?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://london.eater.com/2018/4/19/17255974/chick-n-sours-sub-culture-fried-chicken-pioneers-refurbishment-dalston> - Chick 'n' Sours, the renowned free-range fried chicken restaurant, closed its original Haggerston location on Kingsland Road in April 2018 for comprehensive refurbishment. The renovation aimed to double the restaurant's capacity by adding a new late-night basement bar named Sub Culture, inspired by co-founder Carl Clarke's love for anti-establishment, rave, and punk culture. The expanded menu introduced dishes such as kimchi pancakes with fried chicken and Chengdu buffalo sauce, along with a new Jamaican lager called Jamrock, created in collaboration with Horace Panter of The Specials. The refurbishment was part of Chick 'n' Sours' efforts to enhance the dining experience and solidify its position in London's culinary scene. ([london.eater.com](https://london.eater.com/2018/4/19/17255974/chick-n-sours-sub-culture-fried-chicken-pioneers-refurbishment-dalston?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.restaurantonline.co.uk/Article/2022/04/05/Quick-service-spinoff-of-Chick-n-Sours-CHIK-N-to-rebrand-as-Chicken-Shop-with-multiple-openings-planned> - CHIK'N, the quick-service spinoff of Chick 'n' Sours, announced plans to rebrand as Chicken Shop under a new partnership with Soho House Group, with multiple openings planned by the end of 2022. The rebranding aimed to expand the brand's presence in London's competitive fried chicken market. The menu featured the signature Straight Up Chik'n burger, chicken tenders, wings with sticky Sichuan sauce, and house fries. The partnership with Soho House Group was expected to add credibility to the brand, with plans to open 10 new sites, including both restaurants and delivery-only kitchens. The acquisition of the Chicken Shop brand name and intellectual property followed discussions between CHIK'N's backer, Sir Charles Dunstone, and Nick Jones, founder and CEO of Soho House. ([restaurantonline.co.uk](https://www.restaurantonline.co.uk/Article/2022/04/05/Quick-service-spinoff-of-Chick-n-Sours-CHIK-N-to-rebrand-as-Chicken-Shop-with-multiple-openings-planned?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.timeout.com/london/news/chick-n-sours-is-back-londons-fried-chicken-institution-is-now-delivering-052620> - Chick 'n' Sours, London's beloved fried chicken institution, reopened its original Haggerston branch for takeaway and delivery in May 2020. The limited menu available for contactless collection or delivery via Deliveroo included disco wings, chicken tenders, and two substantial sandwiches: the General and the K-Pop. Sides featured bang bang cucumber, green slaw, and beef dripping fries. Additionally, sour cocktails were packaged for at-home enjoyment. To support local food charity The Felix Project, £1 from every takeaway order was donated. This reopening marked Chick 'n' Sours' adaptation to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring continued service to its loyal customers. ([timeout.com](https://www.timeout.com/london/news/chick-n-sours-is-back-londons-fried-chicken-institution-is-now-delivering-052620?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://www.standard.co.uk/topic/chicken-restaurant> - The Evening Standard provides the latest news, breaking stories, and commentary on chicken restaurants, including updates on Chick 'n' Sours. The publication covers various aspects of the restaurant industry, highlighting trends, openings, and closures. For instance, it reported on the reopening of Chick 'n' Sours' original site in Haggerston, following a refurbishment that introduced a new basement bar named Sub Culture. The Evening Standard serves as a valuable resource for readers interested in the dynamic world of London's dining scene, offering insights into popular establishments and emerging culinary trends. ([standard.co.uk](https://www.standard.co.uk/topic/chicken-restaurant?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://www.tripadvisor.com/Restaurant_Review-g186338-d19901780-Reviews-Chick_n_Sours-London_England.html> - TripAdvisor features reviews and information about Chick 'n' Sours, a popular fried chicken restaurant in London. The reviews highlight the restaurant's offerings, including its signature chicken sandwiches and sides like kimchi sauerkraut. Customers praise the quality of the food, noting the amazing fries and the unique flavour combinations. The reviews also mention the restaurant's atmosphere and the shared tables, contributing to a vibrant dining experience. While some reviews touch upon service aspects, the overall sentiment reflects a positive reception of Chick 'n' Sours' culinary offerings and dining environment. ([tripadvisor.com](https://www.tripadvisor.com/Restaurant_Review-g186338-d19901780-Reviews-Chick_n_Sours-London_England.html?utm_source=openai))