# London’s historic venues risk public safety as food hygiene standards continue to decline



A seven-year-old boy was rushed to emergency care after consuming a burger at a café within London’s Trocadero complex, exposing serious lapses in health and safety standards related to gluten-free food handling. An investigation revealed that staff lacked the proper training and knowledge necessary to safely manage gluten-free diets, increasing the risk of dangerous cross-contamination. This incident, alongside a subsequent inspection, uncovered five breaches of basic food safety regulations at the venue.

The authority responsible for regulation handed down a £45,000 fine to the company managing the café, Trocadero (London) Hotels Limited. Once the violations were brought to light, director Marc Sandfort responded by ordering a comprehensive kitchen overhaul and introducing stricter procedures. Despite his efforts, the fact remains that in 2020 the same establishment proudly received a four-star rating—demonstrating a shocking decline in standards over recent years. The tragic incident with the young boy exposes how lax oversight has ultimately put vulnerable customers at unnecessary risk, highlighting the urgency for tighter regulation and accountability across the hospitality sector.

Sandfort, a German national living in England, holds multiple directorships and claims to be spearheading reforms after this avoidable health crisis. However, this is just the latest example of how historic venues, potentially emblematic of London’s once-glamorous hospitality scene, are suffering from neglect and mismanagement. Such failures come amid a broader context of declining food safety standards nationwide—where over 550 hotel kitchens, including about 60 in London, have been rated at two stars or below by food safety regulators. Major hotels like the Royal Lancaster and Radisson Blu have also been instructed to improve hygiene practices, revealing systemic issues that extend far beyond a single café.

The Trocadero site, already plagued by operational struggles and delays in plans to transform it into a modern pod hotel with luxury amenities, illustrates the broader mismanagement that afflicts those clubhouse-like venues. Recent setbacks with funding and design modifications threaten the ambitious redevelopment, with reports suggesting that the plan’s future hangs in the balance. Such stagnation and the ongoing neglect of basic safety standards are emblematic of a broader failure to protect the public’s health and uphold quality.

Ultimately, this episode underscores the urgent need for decisive action and stricter regulation in the hospitality industry. Allowing venues to continue operating without proper oversight puts customers, especially those with allergies or dietary restrictions, at risk. It’s high time to bring accountability back into focus—before another preventable tragedy occurs, and London's once-great venues become increasingly unsafe for those they serve.

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/trocadero-rainforest-cafe-boy-gluten-free-food-fined-b1252791.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/trocadero-rainforest-cafe-boy-gluten-free-food-fined-b1252791.html> - A seven-year-old boy required emergency treatment after consuming a burger at London's Trocadero, where staff lacked knowledge of gluten-free food handling. Inspectors found health and safety violations, including cross-contamination risks and inadequate staff training. Trocadero (London) Hotels Limited, involved in managing the café, was fined £45,000 for five health and safety breaches. Director Marc Sandfort took immediate action to rectify the issues after the second failed inspection. The café had previously passed a 2020 council health and safety inspection with a four out of five-star rating.
3. <https://www.inkl.com/news/boy-needed-emergency-treatment-after-meal-at-trocadero-cafe-where-gluten-free-food-rules-were-breached> - A seven-year-old boy needed emergency treatment after eating a burger at London's Trocadero, where staff did not understand how to properly serve safe gluten-free food. Inspectors found health and safety failings, including cross-contamination risks and inadequate staff training. Trocadero (London) Hotels Limited, involved in running the café, was fined £45,000 for five health and safety breaches. Director Marc Sandfort took urgent action to clean up the kitchen and improve procedures after the second failed inspection. The café had previously passed a 2020 council health and safety inspection with a four out of five-star rating.
4. <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/officers/8CxdemSCSD2mVQQ6BxB4vFvetfg/appointments> - Marc Sandfort, born in May 1974, is a German national residing in England. He has held directorial positions in several companies, including Trocadero (London) Hotel Limited, Criterion Capital Limited, and Zedwell North Oxford Street Limited. His appointments span from September 2020 to April 2023, with his correspondence address listed as 16 Babmaes Street, London, SW1Y 6HD. His occupation is listed as Director.
5. <https://www.thecaterer.com/news/trocadero-hotel-project-hit-by-new-delay> - The Trocadero hotel project in London's West End has experienced another delay due to design issues and funding concerns. Accor, set to operate the hotel under its Ibis brand, is reportedly considering withdrawing from the project. The building, owned by Golfrate, has faced multiple redevelopment challenges over the years, with previous plans for an Ibis hotel dating back to 2007. The current project aims to transform the Trocadero into a 740-bed pod hotel, with a rooftop bar and pool.
6. <https://www.foodserviceequipmentjournal.com/hotel-kitchens-lambasted-over-hygiene-tandards/> - Research indicates that over 550 hotel kitchens across the UK, including 60 in London, have received two stars or less from the Food Standards Agency, indicating subpar hygiene standards. Notable establishments with low ratings include the Royal Lancaster hotel near Hyde Park and the Radisson Blu Edwardian in Covent Garden. A two-star rating signifies that improvement is necessary, while a one-star rating indicates major improvement is required. The findings highlight widespread concerns about food safety in the hospitality industry.
7. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/watchdog-orders-dozens-of-hotels-in-capital-to-improve-food-hygiene-10068384.html> - Nearly 60 London hotels, including high-end establishments like the Royal Lancaster and Radisson Blu Edwardian, have been ordered to improve their food hygiene by a government watchdog. Over 550 hotels across the UK received two stars or less from the Food Standards Agency, indicating substandard hygiene practices. The findings underscore the need for enhanced food safety measures in the hospitality sector to ensure public health and safety.