



| [Newsletters](#) |

A Very Sensory Evening

Dunkelrestaurant Nocti Vagus, Berlin's Dark Restaurant: Our first restaurant review (tough job I know)

Jo Easingwood (Communications)

On a recent trip some of the Trust went to Berlin's first dark restaurant. Advertised as 'A new world of delicacies and culinary delights in absolute darkness. A new experience which appeals to all senses', we were intrigued to find out how well it matched this strapline. Before I go on I have to point out that we did not go to this restaurant to get the feeling of being blind, nor did we feel that was the point of the restaurant. For us it was about how the senses worked in there, which ones were heightened, which ones were diluted. We went for the sensory experience of the place.

Firstly we were led into a dimly lit stylish bar and lounge. There we were given aperitifs and the menus. As they don't want you to know exactly what you are going to eat, you have to choose from a set menu which, on this evening, comprised poultry, vegetarian, game, and fish. Each of the courses was explained in poetic verse, so we weren't entirely sure what we'd get.

Then we were asked to line up in single file outside a door with black out curtains. At this point, as a sighted person, I thought that when we got into the restaurant area our eyes would adjust. It couldn't be that dark!

We were given over to the charge of our waitress. The waiters all have a level of visual impairment, and from the moment you exit the comfort of the lounge you are in their hands.

Then we went in.

Oh, it was dark. Complete blackness awaited. And there it remained for the entire duration of our meal. We were led to our table and seated.

You are never shown the layout of the room, nor see any fellow diners, although you can hear them all chatting to one another. But never, at any point, can you see even your hand in front of your face.

[Home](#)

[About the Trust](#)

[Information](#)

[Services](#)

[Projects](#)

[Newsletters](#)

[Feedback](#)

Search



[Join our mailing list](#)



What struck us more than anything was the sensations it gave us. We were all very aware of one another, we listened to each other, enjoyed each other's voices, trusted one another to look after our neighbours, we touched each other's hands, we waited until each other had stopped talking before we replied, enjoying the formation of the words and the accents of those who spoke them, and we never dropped a single glass or piece of cutlery! Getting to grips with our knives and forks and the size of our food was a balance I am not sure

anyone mastered. But when food arrived our noses were working overtime.

Some people found it extremely claustrophobic and unnerving, others felt liberated, some could get a feeling for the size and shape of the room without any visual clues, others had no idea how the table was laid out or where other diners were.

Without giving any more away, the consensus was that it was a very rewarding experience. Nobody can suggest every person with a visual impairment can see only blackness (being that visual impairment comes in so many different forms), the point is that on that night it made everyone's experience of sight in that room equal.

For more information on Dunkelrestaurant Nocti Vagus: <http://www.noctivagus.de/>.

[A Day Out with BTCV](#) | [Index](#) | [The Green Flag Award Scheme: Inclusive Training](#)

Registered Charity No. 1020670. Company limited by guarantee No. 02811046

© 2003 Sensory Trust