

FT Lunch for a Fiver update

19 Jan 2009 by Nick Lander

The first week of the *Financial Times*' 2009 [lunch promotion](#) 'Take a Friend for a Fiver', which runs in the UK until Friday 13 Feb, ended on three very different, equally positive, notes.

The first came from Peter Harden of Hardens' restaurant guides, who has been in contact with all the restaurants and has masterminded the promotion's micro- site www.ft.com/lunch. He reported that traffic on the site is three times higher than that of last year, an excellent sign of reader interest.

The second came in the following email from Neville Abraham. Just to put Neville in context, he has been in the restaurant business for over 30 years (for which he has been awarded the CBE) and has an approach to restaurants that can only be described as commercial, analytical and, often, wonderfully quirky. He is currently chairman of the company which operates Le Café Anglais restaurant and is a director of Liberty Wines. For all these different reasons I have always valued his opinions very highly so I was thrilled when he wrote on Saturday morning:

'Well done! The *FT* promotion seems to have got off to a good start – Café Anglais has been host to several tables a day and when we visited Clarke's on Wed it was v buzzy. What's especially nice is that a restaurant can go through its normal paces without feeling it must put on something especially cheap or second grade.'

Finally, and most surprisingly, came an email from a reader in Boston, Massachusetts. She is a great fan of The *FT*'s food and drink pages and had seen the reference to the promotion in the US edition of the paper but was unable to find the vouchers as they are published in the UK edition only. She is, however, coming to the UK in early February and is looking forward to spending some money in the participating restaurants, courtesy of the vouchers I have offered to send her.