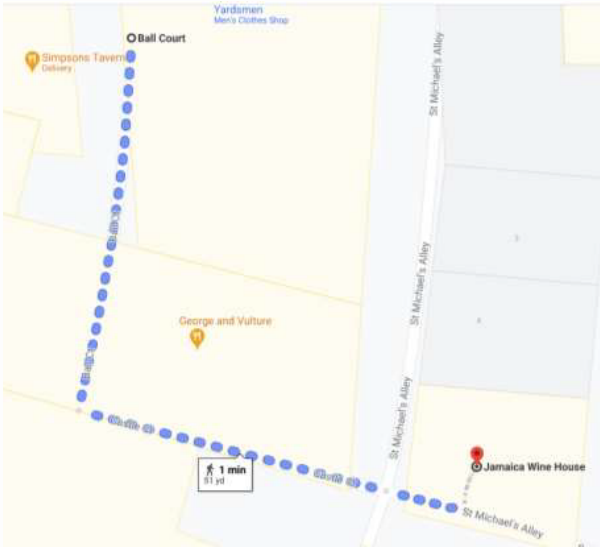


THE HIDDEN TREASURES OF THE CITY

5: Simpson's Tavern to The Jamaica Wine House



Founded in 1652, the establishment now known as the JAMAICA WINE HOUSE was the first coffee house in London and possibly, England.

It was set up by Pasqua Rosee, manservant to a travelling merchant who had encountered coffee in the Levant and wished to support its introduction to London. The premises known as The Turk's Head took off as coffee and coffee houses became all the rage amongst intellectuals keen to debate new ideas.

It's said the restoration of Charles II was plotted in coffee houses, and businessmen with similar interests gathered at their favourite haunts. The Turk's Head became known as the Jamaica Coffee House as a result of clientele linked with the sugar and slave trade to and from the West Indies.

By 1869, wine became more fashionable and a wine bar was set up in the basement, leading to the current name.

1. From SIMPSON's, **continue** on down **Ball Court** until the end where it meets another little alleyway, **Castle Court**.
2. **Turn left** (eastwards) down **Castle Court** where you should come across THE GEORGE AND VULTURE on the right [Fact Box St. Michael's Alley.



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Things to note:

- Samuel Pepys, whose diaries chronicle 17th century life and major contemporary events, drank here in 1660.
- Look for the 19th century cooker said to have roasted its coffee beans.
- It's now known to today's city worker clientele as 'The Jampot' and is Grade II listed.

The GEORGE AND VULTURE is now open to diners only, but an inn called The George may have existed on this site as far back as 1142. It is claimed that Geoffrey Chaucer, Dick Whittington, Daniel Defoe, Jonathan Swift and Charles Dickens all drank at the inn, with Dickens using it as the HQ for the Pickwick Club in his first novel, 'The Pickwick Papers'.

The story goes that it derived its current name after being rebuilt after The Great Fire of London in 1666 following a partnership with a neighbouring vintner who kept a live vulture. The innkeeper agreed to incorporate the vulture into the pub's name as long as it was set free.