CASE STUDY

Black Rabbit

LONDON, UK

Genelec delivers a feast for the ears at London’s new Black Rabbit restaurant





A RECIPE FOR SUCCESS



To open a successful restaurant in London, where locals and tourists are spoiled for choice, it comes down to a few essential criteria: excellent food, quality service, and a memorable atmosphere. Black Rabbit, a converted former pub in Shepherd's Bush, made sure to capture each of these elements when it officially opened in October 2026. The restaurant and bar had already perfected its menu of Mediterranean-influenced dishes and assembled an experienced team of waiting staff, so all that was left to do was establish the correct ambience to heighten the dining experience for guests. The owner had long believed that West London was missing a venue that combines exceptional food quality with equally impressive music, making it their mission to bring superior sound to Black Rabbit. This premium audio would ultimately come from Genelec Smart IP loudspeakers, delivering a relaxed yet lively soundtrack for visitors, while making day-to-day audio management effortless for staff.

BEYOND THE MENU

When conversations about the restaurant's audio requirements began between Black Rabbit owner and audio technology and system integration specialists HHB, the expectations were quickly defined. "The client made it clear from the outset that sound quality and flexibility were their two main priorities for the venue," says Steve Jones of HHB, who led the support and specification for the project. "They wanted music to set the tone and be heard clearly throughout the dining area without imposing on the guest conversations." A balanced and coherent audio solution was therefore needed to fill the entire restaurant with music, as well as independent volume control across different areas to accommodate the changing atmosphere.

"At the HHB Experience Centre, I held a demonstration for the client to compare a number of audio solutions," reveals Jones. "That session sparked their interest in Genelec and ultimately led to the brand being considered as a viable option for this project." Looking for something both visibly and acoustically suited to the client's requirements, HHB recommended Genelec's Smart IP Series, confident that it could deliver the sound quality, flexibility, and discreet installation needed to meet the ambitions of the Black Rabbit restaurant.

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THE MISSING INGREDIENT

To establish the restaurant's cosy and sociable atmosphere, ten of Genelec's 4430A Smart IP loudspeakers were installed along the walls of the dining area. "They are placed between each window, so the spacing naturally ensures even sound coverage throughout the room," Jones says. As the largest model in the Smart IP range, the 4430As were specified in Genelec's distinctive RAW aluminium finish, creating a striking visual statement that complements the interior design without dominating the space.



Positioning the loudspeakers was one of the main discussions HHB had with the client, particularly whether to install them at eye-level or tucked away in the corners, as is often the case in restaurants and similar hospitality venues. “There was some initial deliberation, but we safely assured the owner that positioning loudspeakers in the middle of the wall would be a good choice as we were confident in how the Smart IPs would look and perform,” continues Jones. “The finished installation proved us right, with the loudspeakers fitting naturally into the venue’s aesthetic design while delivering exactly the coverage and quality we had anticipated.”

In addition to the 4430As, two white 3440A subwoofers deliver low-end reinforcement with one wall-mounted enclosure at each end of the room. “In general, having subwoofers in a restaurant is quite rare, but it really speaks to the client’s goals of ensuring the entire Black Rabbit experience is top quality,” Jones states. “Like the loudspeakers, they are sleek and unobtrusive in

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appearance, but provide the additional depth that really brings the music to life without overwhelming diners."



One of the deciding factors when choosing a Smart IP solution was its streamlined infrastructure. With only one CAT cable needed to carry power, audio and control data per loudspeaker, the deployment of twelve units across a visually sensitive space proved far simpler than a conventional installation. "Lots of cabling can make things look less polished in this type of setting, and that's exactly what Smart IP helped us avoid," comments Jones. Not only did the Smart IP infrastructure ensure a smooth deployment, but it also offers the potential for easy expansion. Additional loudspeakers can be added one at a time, requiring only a single additional cable per loudspeaker, giving Black Rabbit the flexibility to evolve its audio system as the venue develops.

Smart IP's flexibility in terms of volume levels and zone management also makes everyday operation straightforward for waiting and bar staff, allowing the music to be adjusted to suit different areas of the restaurant and changing levels of activity throughout the day. At the heart of the control system is a Q-SYS Core 8 Flex, working alongside an Attero Tech Axon C1 in-wall controller to provide convenient access to audio settings. Music is streamed from TIDAL, with audio distributed over the Dante network via a NETGEAR AV Line M4250-26G4XF-PoE+ managed switch. This integrated approach gives staff simple, reliable control over the restaurant's soundtrack without the need for specialist technical knowledge.

A TASTEFUL SOUNDTRACK

These combined elements have come together to deliver the experience Black Rabbit's owner set out to create. While customers dine on exquisite dishes, mellow Bossa Nova playlists flow effortlessly throughout the restaurant, creating a welcoming atmosphere that complements the food and



conversation. As the venue becomes busier, the system provides the flexibility to adjust the music to match the energy of the room, without compromising the clarity and balance that were central to the owner's intentions.

"We're delighted with how the Genelec system has turned out," says Black Rabbit owner Tarquin Gorst. "The sound quality is exceptional, with a warmth and consistency that really brings out the best in the music. HHB has also delivered a beautifully considered installation, with the loudspeakers adding to the character of the restaurant rather than detracting from its design. The result is exactly the standard of quality we had envisioned for Black Rabbit."

Plans to expand the venue to include a separate Listening Bar are already underway, where Genelec will again play a central role in delivering a high-quality audio experience, this time with more energetic and powerful sound. The future addition reflects the owner's commitment to making music an integral part of Black Rabbit's identity, rather than simply a background element.

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“Genelec are increasingly becoming a go-to choice for the hospitality market as more venues are demanding a higher standard of audio for their experiences,” concludes Jones. “People are caring more about how a destination feels, and sound plays a major role in this. Genelec’s repeated success in this type of environment is a true testament to how they are recognised in the industry and the quality results its solutions can deliver.”

THE DETAILS

Client
Black Rabbit

Integrator
HHB/Scrub

Genelec Distributor
Audiologic

Loudspeakers
- 10 x 4430A RAW
- 2 x 3440A White

Network & Control
Q-SYS
Attero Tech
TIDAL
Dante
NETGEAR

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