

GOING OUT



Bar stars: Laughs come at a pleasing pace in Early Doors

MORE TV ON STAGE



BENIDORM LIVE

The package-tour sitcom that ran for ten series on ITV picks up where the final episode left off. Jake Canuso and Sherrie Hewson (above) are among the returning cast members.

On nationwide tour; at New Wimbledon Theatre, Mar 11 to 16, benidormonstage.com

THE LEAGUE OF GENTLEMEN LIVE! AGAIN

Even after 12 years, LoG stars Mark Gatiss, Steve Pemberton and Reece Shearsmith have lost none of their vim and vigour when it comes to their Royston Vasey grotesques.

On nationwide tour; at The O2 Sep 23 and Hammersmith Apollo Sep 26 to 29, leagueofgentlemen.live

Raise a toast to a warming comedy

LIKE an easy-going mix of *The Royle Family*, *Coronation Street* and *Cheers*, Craig Cash and Phil Mealey's gentle BBC sitcom set in a Stockport pub deserved more than two series back in the early 2000s.

It's been much missed and when this touring stage-show sequel was announced, tickets sold like hot cakes, proving that put-upon landlord Ken (John Henshaw) and catchphrases such as 'crime doesn't

REVIEW

Early Doors
On nationwide tour ★★★★★
by BEN EAST

crack itself' are still well loved. So well loved, in fact, that the audience participation - we saw it at The Lowry in Salford - verges on panto.

Still, it's difficult not to feel some involvement and ownership when the locals - however much they

might play to fond Northern stereotypes - are so affectionately drawn. Henshaw imbues Ken with enough battered charm to make his proposal to barmaid Tanya a fitting central plot device, while there are enough one-liners and punchlines to keep the laughs coming at a pleasing pace.

It's not a show that says anything in particular about Britain in 2018 - other than the odd concession to dating apps and vaping, it's a gentle meander through relationships, family and how, as its final few moments underline, we all deserve one more chance to get things right. *Early Doors* makes this point through uproarious song in an ending straight out of Bollywood that serves to highlight just how warm, open-hearted and eager to please this show is.

By then, whether you watched *Early Doors* back in the day is irrelevant - its winning combination of comedy, nostalgia and pathos wins everyone over.

Early Doors comes to London's Hammersmith Apollo on Oct 2. ticketmaster.co.uk



Winning combination:
The play's characters are affectionately drawn

Louise gets nine-to-five job

There will be plenty for Louise Redknapp and *Love Island* star Amber Davies to talk about as they hit the stage in a West End revival of Dolly Parton's musical *9 To 5*.

Both are enjoying a newly single life - Louise after the end of her marriage to former footballer Jamie, and Amber after her split with *Love Island* partner

Kem Cetinay. The musical, based on the cult 1980s film of the same name, will replace *Dreamgirls* at the Savoy Theatre. Redknapp will play Violet, Davies will play Judy and Brian Conley will take the role of pompous boss Franklin Hart.

Jan 28 to Aug 31, 2019,
Savoy Theatre,
savoy.londontheatres.co.uk



Clocking in: Louise Redknapp

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