

# TARGET

## Intelligence Report

VOLUME XXIII No. 207

S A T U R D A Y

September 18, 2021

### *Viewsletter*

#### Dining and Wining

Dining and Wining

### THE BEST

RESTAURANTS OF HONGKONG ...

AND THE WORST !

<u>Name of Restaurant</u>	Gaddi's
<u>Address of Restaurant</u>	1 <sup>st</sup> Floor, The Peninsula Hongkong, No. 22, Salisbury Road, Kowloon, Hongkong
<u>Date of Visit</u>	Friday, September 10, 2021

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# Dining and Wining

**Category**

**TARGET's Rating**

**Service**

First Impression	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor
Attentiveness to Customers' Needs	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor
Flexibility	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor
Product Expertise of Serving Staff	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor
Speed of Service	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor
Cleanliness of Uniform and Serving Staff	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor

**Ambiance**

Lighting	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor
Music	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor
General	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor

**Food**

Presentation	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor
Taste	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor
Quantity	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor

**Total Cost of Meal**

Very Expensive	Moderately Expensive	Very Reasonably Priced
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**Comments**

On entrance to Gaddi's, the top-flight eatery of The Peninsula Hongkong, things looked almost identical as they did in days of yore.

But, on close inspection, it was only too clear that things are not the same as they used to be.

The thick and very lush carpets that enveloped the entire restaurant's floor were spotless: That aspect of this, the (once) most-prestigious, five-star restaurant of the Hongkong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, had not changed, at all.

Also, the uniforms of the serving staff looked very much in keeping with days of old.

The tables and chairs, as well as their arrangements within the two-tiered, spaciousness of the eatery, had the same appearance as they did when **TARGET** (泰達財經) first visited Gaddi's, more than decades earlier.

But, by the time that this medium's food-appraisal team, comprising four members, all of whom were engaged in investigating restaurants and sampling the food on offer, it was only too obvious as to the many changes that, over time, had come to cause this once, great restaurant to fall from its zenith to that which is, today, close to its nadir.

### The Footstool Debacle

On being seated at the assigned table, since the **TARGET** quartet comprised three females and one male, the question as to where to place the ladies' handbags became a seemingly important determination of the young lady, immaculately dressed in her spotless uniform, that had to be considered.

Originally, she brought over a rather inadequate footstool, one that could easily accommodate one of female guest's handbag, leaving little room remaining, about six inches, in fact.

When a second handbag was attempted to be placed on the remaining six inches of the footstool, it skidded onto the floor.

Try a second time: Still the second handbag skidded onto the floor.

Again and again and, always, the second handbag found itself more at home on the floor than trying to balance on the six inches, left bare on the footstool.

The young lady tried in vain to make room for the second handbag: To no avail.

One of **TARGET**'s female squad members suggested that the problem could easily be solved by obtaining a second footstool.

## Dining and Wining

The suggestion resulted in the uniformed Gaddi's employee pooh-pooing the idea.

Dismissing any consideration of trying to obtain a second footstool, the female employee strode away in a huff, having murmured a hushed expletive, during her exit.

At this point, the lone male **TARGET** food appraiser, in desperation by this time, tired and exasperated at the stupidity of the obvious unwillingness of trying to find the solution to the equation of fitting two ladies' handbags onto a single footstool that could only accommodate one handbag – Who knows, perhaps the young uniformed lady might have been suffering from a mental apparition! – demanded a second footstool, that just happened to be about two feet from the first footstool, near the window behind **TARGET**'s table, be seconded.

And the matter was settled: Two handbags could easily fit on two footstools.

The footstool episode was to become the environmental mantra of the Gaddi's of today.

### The Menu Of Gaddi's

On studying the Gaddi's menu, that which was very apparent was its obvious limitations.

The Manager of Gaddi's, Mr Michele Drusacchi, who came to welcome the lone male member of the **TARGET** quartet – while the three ladies had gone to refresh themselves as ladies are prone to do after suffering from the oppressive heat of summer evenings in Hongkong – explained that it was the restaurant's policy only to serve Kagoshima Beef Sirloin.

He suggested, with a smile, that Kagoshima Beef Sirloin was something of a treat.

When explained that one of the female members in attendance did not appreciate the very fatty taste of Japanese beef, also named '*Japanese Wagyu Beef*' in some Hongkong restaurants, Mr Michele Drusacchi explained, almost immediately and with gusto, that Gaddi's Japanese beef is never fatty – at all!

At this juncture, this medium was very interested in putting a prompt end to the conversation; and, the lack of another subject matter with this interlocutor made very clear **TARGET**'s intent.

Mr Michele Drusacchi decided to make his exit; he sauntered over to a young couple that had just been shown to a table, only a few paces from **TARGET**'s.

Mr Michele Drusacchi made no attempt to re-engage this medium in a tête-à-tête and, for that, **TARGET** was most grateful.

After all, what other of his fallacious '*mistakes*' in respect of truisms, especially with regard to Japanese beef ... or any other subject, for that matter, could one expect to be uttered from this gentleman?

On the return of the three female **TARGET** appraisers, this medium confirmed from a passing waiter that only Japanese beef could be ingested at Gaddi's.

On noting that Beluga Caviar was clearly printed on the menu, one was warned that all the so-called caviars, stated on the menu in the English language, was of a Chinese variety: None hailed from the waters of the Caspian Sea.

In the Chinese language, it was stated that all caviars (on the menu) had indeed been sourced from the People's Republic of China: 中國人工培養混種鱈魚魚子醬 and 中國人工培養歐洲魚皇鱈魚魚子醬.

After a little time had elapsed, it was determined that which should be sampled from the à la carte part of the menu:

### *Four Commencer*

*Britany (sic!) Crab, Greek Yogurt, Celeriac, Granny Smith Apple*

*Pan-Seared Duck Foie Gras, Solliès Figs, Beetroot, Fresh Hazelnuts*

*Lobster Bisque, Cognac, Confit Tomatoes, Fennel*

### *A Suivre*

*Blue Brittany Lobster, Smoked Rosemary, Zucchini Flower, Romesco Sauce*

*French John Dory, Marinière-style Clams, Bordier Seaweed Butter*

*Miéral Bresse Chicken, Black Trumpet Mushrooms, Polenta, Tarragon Poultry Jus*

### *Desserts*

*Crêpe Suzette*

*L'Exotique*

*Light Coconut Mousse, Caramélisé Pineapple,*

*White Chocolate Crunch, Fabana Sorbet*

*Coffee*

# Dining and Wining

The (first) First Course – the foie gras – was par excellence.

The (second) First Course – the Lobster Bisque – was, also, par excellence.

The (third) First Course – the Brittany Crab – was insipid due to the fact that it had been frozen for too long a period of time in the restaurant's icebox. And the embellishment of Greek yogurt, celeriac and Granny Smith apples found it difficult to mask the lack of a defined taste of the frozen mush.

The (first) Main Course – the French John Dory – with an absolute certainty, had been another victim of the restaurant's icebox: It was, as one may discern in single word, tasteless. If one closed one's eyes, it would have been impossible to know that which was being placed in one's mouth. The fish dish did not taste poorly because it had no relevant or determinable taste. And even with some strong-tasting spices, having been added during the cooking process, they were insufficient to improve the non-existent flavour.

The (second) Main Course – the Brittany Blue Lobster – had been yet another victim of the restaurant's icebox. Simply put, the lobster tail – Yes! Only the tail of the marine crustacean – had been recently taken out of the restaurant's icebox before being served, lukewarm!!!

The (third) Main Course – the Miéral Bresse Chicken – should have been the best of the three Main Courses, but the breast of the bird lacked any distinguishable flavour, also. One could not state, in all honesty, that it had been another victim of the restaurant's icebox, but if that were not the chief reason for the problem with this course, this medium could not understand the reason for the insipidity of the dish.

The (two) Desserts – the Crêpes Suzette and the L'Exotique – they were both, in a word: Exquisite.

(By the way, the two portions of Crêpes Suzette were cooked just alongside **TARGET**'s table. The person, preparing them from scratch, was one of the uniformed Chinese waiters.)

Was it possible that the Friday of **TARGET**'s visit had been the chef's night out?

## Conclusion

Management of The Peninsula may sleep soundly at night from now on – since this medium has no intention of ever returning to Gaddi's.

From being amongst the most-prestigious restaurants of the world, Gaddi's offerings have fallen to being below the standard of the fare, found at the cooked-food stalls that is readily available in the Wanchai Area of Hongkong Island.

In fact, the food, at this part of Hongkong Island, is a damn-lot better than that served up at Gaddi's, today.

Ask any worker that frequently eats in Wanchai, spending his money at these cooked-food stalls, and he would readily state that nothing could beat the dishes of Wanchai.

As for the service staff at Gaddi's, today, many of them do not have even a simple working knowledge of the English language, be they male or female.

The toilet, reserved for ladies, was filthy on the Friday of this medium's visit, and it appeared that nobody was in charge of cleaning it.

As was reported to this medium, the management of The Peninsula had, for some time, been hoping to lure well-heeled visitors from the People's Republic of China, proper, being separate and distinct from the Hongkong Special Administrative Region, to come to Gaddi's in order to sample European cuisine.

But COVID-19 put that plan to bed for the best part of past two years – and, perhaps, for some years to follow, too.

Management's idea, to lure Chinese nationals from across the border with Hongkong, to visit these 416 square miles and to spend some of their money at The Peninsula and to eat at Gaddi's, was not a bad idea, actually, because it is unlikely that, should such guests from across the border with Hongkong, determined to sample the food at Gaddi's, as it is, today, they, most likely, would come to understand the reason that Chinese cuisine is so hotly desired, internationally, compared to most other cuisines of the world.

In comparison with Chinese cuisine, such Chinese guests from across the border would not be able to compare the best cooked food, found at the Wanchai cooked-food stalls, with some of the worst-cooked food that Hongkong has to offer – at Gaddi's!

Lastly, one has to ponder: Was \$HK8,000-plus well spent on the above meal for four people?