

## Dining and Wining ... Where To Go ... Where Not To Go

### THE BEST

### RESTAURANTS OF HONGKONG ...

### AND THE WORST !

|  |  |              |            |
|--|--|--------------|------------|
| <u>Name of Restaurant</u>                | Caprice, Four Seasons Hotel              |              |            |
| <u>Address of Restaurant</u>             | No. 8, Finance Street, Central, Hongkong |              |            |
| <u>Date of Visit</u>                     | Monday, October 15, 2006                 |              |            |
| <u>Category</u>                          | <u>TARGET's Rating</u>                   |              |            |
| Service                                  | Excellent                                | Acceptable   | Poor       |
| 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       |
| <u>Smoking and Non-Smoking Areas</u>     | Smoking                                  | Non-Smoking  |            |
| <u>Ambiance</u>                          |  |              |            |
| Lighting                                 | Excellent                                | Acceptable   | Poor       |
| Music                                    | Excellent                                | Acceptable   | Poor       |
| General                                  | Excellent                                | Acceptable   | Poor       |
| <u>Food</u>                              |  |              |            |
| Presentation                             | Excellent                                | Acceptable   | Poor       |
| Taste                                    | Excellent                                | Acceptable   | Poor       |
| Quantity                                 | Excellent                                | Acceptable   | Poor       |
| <u>Wine</u>                              |  |              |            |
| Choice                                   | Extensive                                | Limited      | Unbalanced |
| Cost                                     | Reasonable                               | Unreasonable |            |
| Storage of Wine                          | Good                                     | Poor         |            |
| Expertise of Sommelier                   | Excellent                                | Acceptable   | Poor       |
| <u>Total Cost of Meal</u>                |  |              |            |

Very Expensive

Moderately Expensive

Very Reasonable Priced

**Name of Director of Food and  
Beverage**  
**Name of Executive Chef**

Mr Peter Draminsky  
Mr Brett Patterson

### **Comments**

In summary, nearly everything about Caprice is, in **TARGET**'s opinion, as good as it gets.

This medium had been warned by various parties that things at the fine-dining outlet of Four Seasons Hotel was not up to scratch and that one would be very disappointed with nearly everything about this much-vaunted restaurant.

Well, that is utter rubbish!

If anything, Caprice has replaced the hallowed position, previously held by Gaddi's of the Peninsula Hotel in Tsimshatsui ... by miles.

Last Monday, without informing Caprice and with no fanfare, at all, **TARGET**'s team rolled into Caprice, dressed very casually, and rolling around a small travel bag, which contained some sports gear.

The table, assigned to us by the receptionist, was one of the worst in the restaurant, of that there could be little question, because the open kitchen was directly behind our table and the noise of the cooks and the waiters, chatting away, doing their things, was, to be polite, quite disturbing and made conversation difficult.

Our initial waiter could not speak English very well so that it was very difficult to understand very much that he was trying to mumble.

He said, among other things, that the 2 platters of butter, placed on the table, were salted and unsalted and that the restaurant cooks had made the butter.

The salted butter was, completely, inedible.

The waiter's statement about the butter, having been made in the kitchen of Caprice, turned out to be a lie and, after a little talk with the restaurant's captain, the offending butter was removed and the truth came to light: It had been imported from France.

The first waiter disappeared from the scene, at this point, replaced by a crew of waiters, who seemed to be completely tuned into the situation.

Nobody, at this point, knew of the identity of **TARGET**'s presence: We were just a fairly poorly dressed couple, trying out the food.

**TARGET**, then, ordered the following:

#### **Menu du Chef**

Maple Mille-Feuille of Foie Gras with  
Milkbread Mouse and Apricot  
Marmalade

Coquille Saint Jacques in Autumn  
Pumpkin Sauce and Caramelized Dry  
Fruits

Roasted Lamb Fillet with Lacquered  
Eggplant of Oriental Spices, Fresh Mint  
and Date Purée

#### **A La Carte**

Pumpkin Soup  
(with White Truffles at \$HK68 per  
gramme)

Challan Duck Fillet with Spring  
Vegetable Ribbons, Pearl Barley and  
Mostarda Risotto

Price: \$HK780 plus  
10 percent Service Charge

Price: \$HK630 plus  
10 percent Service Charge

To describe every dish would require a tome, so **TARGET** will not even attempt to do so: Suffice it to say that one would be hard-pressed to complain about any one dish in respect of presentation, taste or the quality of the raw produce that had been used to prepare the dishes.

It was the best of the best, to be sure.

The first course of the Menu du Chef – the Maple Mille-Feuille of Foie Gras with Milkbread Mousse and Apricot Marmalade – was a picture, matched only by its delicious multiple layers of flavours.

It differed completely from the usual fresh foie gras, served in most restaurants, where the goose liver is bathed in a port-wine sauce, and, if one had not read the menu, one could easily mistake this dish for a desert pastry.

But the taste left no question in one's mind: It was fresh goose liver, sautéed to perfection and inserted in between an oval-shaped, mille-feuille.

The second course – the Coquille Saint Jacques in Autumn Pumpkin Sauce and Caramelized Dry Fruits – was similar to the manner of Cantonese steamed scallops, complete with the clam shell, but with a touch of France.

It was, without question, very good, but it lacked the uniqueness of the first course.

The Main Course – the Roasted Lamb Fillet with Lacquered Eggplant of Oriental Spices – was out of this world, both in presentation and in taste.

The pinkish meat could be cut with a fork and almost melted in one's mouth.

This reviewer had asked for some mint jelly: It was not required and, if anything, it detracted from the wonderful flavours of the lamb.

From the à la carte menu, first, the pumpkin soup with fresh, white truffles was outstanding, the truffles, enhancing the flavours of the soup.

As for the Challan Duck Fillet with Mostarda Risotto, it, like the lamb from the Menu du Chef, could be cut with a fork and nearly melted in one's mouth.

The duck, itself, was both juicy and tasty, but the cooking method had been sympathetic to the texture of the meat, without overpowering it with spices.

The flavour of the '*risotto*', which was made of barley, only added to the flavours of the complete dish.

Having eaten most of the meal, it suddenly dawned on certain members of the serving staff that the **TARGET** team was not just eating a meal, but was taking note of that which had been devoured – with a certain amount of gusto.

Along came a procession of people to talk to us – without suggesting anything, of course – culminating in the Pastry Chef, Mr Lucovic Douteau, coming over to explain the reason that Caprice could not serve crêpe Suzette on the day of our visit.

But, that was not all: Along came 3 special desserts as compensation for the absence of the crêpe Suzette, each of the desserts, being tastier, or as fattening, as the first.

Who said only Yan can cook?

Lastly, a word about Mr Bobby Wong, the sommelier of Caprice: He can be totally trusted to recommend the best wine with one's food; he does not '*milk*' guests to purchase the most-expensive wines.

**Warning!** For Subscribers who are on a diet, or those of you, who are watching your waistline, don't go

to Caprice.

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