

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

**THE BEST
RESTAURANTS OF HONGKONG ...
AND THE WORST !**

Name of Restaurant

Grissini, Grand Hyatt Hongkong

Address of Restaurant

Number 1, Harbour Road, Wanchai, Hongkong

Date of Visit

Tuesday, November 28, 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

Smoking and Non-Smoking Areas

Smoking

Non-Smoking

Ambiance

Lighting	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor
Music -- None	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor
General	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor

Food

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	
	None			

Total Cost of Meal

Very Expensive Moderately Expensive Very Reasonable Priced

Name of Director of Food and Beverage

Mr Ross Cooper

Name of Executive Chef

Mr Marco Avitabile

Comments

On every previous occasion that **TARGET** () has surveyed Grissini, the fine-dining outlet at Grand Hyatt Hongkong, the food had been a terrible disappointment.

But last Tuesday, after an absence of some years, it is very evident that things have changed at this Italian-styled restaurant.

The Chef de Cuisine, Mr Marco Torre, **TARGET** was told by our waiter, had only been in his position for less than one month and was keen to change the existing menu.

That was later confirmed: The menu will be changed in the first fortnight of December, in fact.

Mr Marco Torre appeared during **TARGET**'s visit, dressed traditionally in a white cook's uniform, complete with tall, stove-pipe white chef's hat.

TARGET took the trouble, at the end of the meal, to walk over to this tall gentleman and state: *'You are a welcome asset to this restaurant'*.

The reply: *'Che?'*

TARGET repeated: *'I repeat: You are a welcome asset to this restaurant.'*

The response: *'Che!'*

TARGET took into consideration that this chef is, after all, Italian, and it is well known that, in every Italian, there is a bit of the late, Naples-born tenor, Enrico Caruso, so this medium assumed that Mr Marco Torre knows more about cooking and singing than talking and, as such, there was little reason to try to engage him in a conversation in order to learn any of his culinary expertise.

On the night that **TARGET** dined at Grissini, this is that which was ordered:

Culatello Zimbello Ham with Seasonal Fresh Fruit,
Red-Tropea Onion Marmalade and
Homemade Baked Ricotta

\$HK190

Light Smoked Red Shrimps with
Lemone Leaf Green Pea Puree and Borage Greens

\$HK180

Black Squid Ink Pasta Filled with
Italian Cod, Green Olives and Celery Root

\$HK200

Milk Fed Veal Fillet with
Pancetta and Sage Porcini Mushrooms and Almond Sauce
\$HK380

Hunter Style Roasted Chicken with
Fresh Herbs and Tomatoes
\$HK250

Lemon Custard, made with a Sorrento Lemon \$HK90

The wine list was difficult to read due to the poor lighting in this restaurant and, in any case, many of the Italian wines were unknown to **TARGET**.

To assistance of **TARGET** and without summoning him, along came Mr Roberto Garrone, Manager of Grissini, who took the trouble to locate a wine, made from the Sangiovese grape, namely:

Trescone, Lamborghini, Vintage 2003 \$HK680

This turned out to be a smooth, fruity wine, a little cheeky, perhaps, but with plenty of nose.

It matched the food, perfectly.

The Culatello Zimbello Ham was, in a word, superb.

Italian (mistakenly called Parma Ham) hams are, normally, among the best in the world, but this variety, according to Mr Roberto Garrone, is cut from the juiciest part of the animal: The rump.

TARGET clarified the statement of this learned gentleman: *'You mean that this ham is sliced off the pig's bottom?'*

The answer was in the affirmative, with the addition: *'But that is the juiciest part, is it not?'*

TARGET could hardly response to that statement since it could well be incriminating.

As for the Light Smoked Red Shrimps, they, literally, melted in one's mouth.

The shrimps had been shelled from the head down and very lightly seared so that the meat was gentle, succulent, and extremely tasty.

To overcook the shrimps, even by 30 seconds, would have been to make them tough.

Accompanying the shrimps was a delicious green pea puree: A perfect combination.

The Black Squid Ink Pasta was something that cannot be imagined: One, really, has to taste it in order to appreciate it.

A mixture of cod, green olives and celery root had been stuffed into a piece of handmade pasta, as thin as a piece of paper.

This was not a dehydrated piece of pasta, but a square of pasta that enveloped the cod, green olives and celery root mixture.

The main course of chilled veal, flown in from Holland, was tender and had a very mild taste which was augmented by the pancetta and sage.

The Hunter Style Chicken was a poor rendition of Pollo Cacciatore, but, nevertheless, it was very tasty.

In a copper frying pan, placed on the table, a whole baby chicken had been sautéed, then permitted to stew in fresh tomatoes, with herbs and onions.

The dish is served with polenta, which had been laced with a Fontina cheese.

The Sorrento Lemon Custard was only mildly sweet without being in the least bit sour.

The custard was served in a scooped-out Sorrento lemon.

The dish was acidic, but not offensively so.

It had the consistency of a soft, scrambled egg, made of milk and lemon.

In short, it was something special.

As was the entire dinner.

TARGET will be returning.

*While **TARGET** makes every attempt to ensure accuracy of all data published, **TARGET** cannot be held responsible for any errors and/or omissions.*

*If readers feel that they would like to voice their opinions about that which they have read in **TARGET**, please feel free to e-mail your views to editor@targetnewspapers.com. **TARGET** does not guarantee to publish readers' views, but reserves the right so to do subject to the laws of libel.*