

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

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

Name of Restaurant

Harlan's

Address of Restaurant

Shop 2075, Podium Level Two, IFC Mall, Central, Hongkong

Date of Visit

Sunday, December 2, 2007

CategoryTARGET's RatingService

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
<u>Wine</u> (UNKNOWN)			
Choice -- French Only	Extensive	Limited	Unbalanced
Cost	Reasonable	Unreasonable	Very Expensive
Storage of Wine	Good	Poor	Unknown
Expertise of Sommelier -- None	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor

Total Cost of Meal

Very Expensive	Moderately Expensive	Very Reasonably Priced
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Name of Food and Beverage Manager

Nil

Name of Executive Chef

Nil

Comments

Within a few steps from that fraud of a French restaurant, Le Petit Paris, located on Level Two of IFC Mall, there is another fraud of a restaurant: Harlan's.

TARGET () visited Harlan's on Sunday, December 2, 2007, at 12:45 p.m. mainly because it appeared to be a much more inviting eatery than Le Petit Paris and this medium felt obliged to try to prove that not all of the food outlets at IFC Mall are either frauds or, just plain lousy.

Well, sad to state, **TARGET** has yet to prove that not all of the food outlets at this shopping mall are above the standard of mediocrity – because Harlan's is another restaurant of the genre of Le Petit Paris, albeit not pretending to serve French food.

On the Sunday that this medium visited Harlan's, this was that which was ordered:

The Lunch Experience

Slow-Cooked Veal Loin, Capers, Anchovies and Creamy Tuna Sauce

Wood-Stone Roasted Cajun Spring Chicken, Grilled Vegetables and Tomato Rice

Pastry Chef Tung's Dessert Surprise

\$HK268

A La Carte Menu

Minestrone 'Milanese' Style, Spinach Dumplings

\$HK98

Ringo and Tat Pizza

(Salami, Pepperoni, Sausage, Capsicum, Olives, Spanish Onions and Cheese)

\$HK128

The Lunch Experience

And what an experience it was!

With incantations, this reviewer prays, daily, that there will not be the requirement to have to repeat the experience.

The Slow-Cooked Veal Loin, Capers, Anchovies and Creamy Tuna Sauce, **TARGET**'s waiter, Rana, explained, was a type of salad.

It turned out to be a pretentious attempt of that Italian dish, known as Carpaccio.

One could not describe this dish as being completely inedible, but it approached that level, to be sure.

It was, however, veal of sorts although it was difficult to taste the stuff because the mayonnaise covered any hint of a flavour of

meat.

Perhaps that was the object of the exercise?

As for the Wood-Stone Roasted Cajun Spring Chicken, Grilled Vegetables and Tomato Rice, it would be wise of the owner of Harlan's not to try to pass off this dish to a person from Louisiana because that could lead to some real problems.

This dish was as far removed from Cajun food as the slop, served at Le Petit Paris, is from French food.

The chicken – obviously frozen – was completely tasteless and even the sauce could not help the poor lifeless bird.

If this reviewer had closed his eyes, it would have been virtually impossible to know what one was eating.

As for the rice, **TARGET** wonders whether or not it was Uncle Ben's 'miracle' rice, a rice which requires no cooking: Pop in some hot water and, within 5 minutes, one sees the miracle of reconstituted rice.

To summarise the dish: It rates a score of about one point out of 10 points, with 10 points, being the highest mark possible.

As for the dessert, **TARGET** will never know what it was because it was never served!

After waiting about 10 minutes for the Pastry Chef Tung's Dessert Surprise, **TARGET** asked Rana what was the dessert.

Rana responded: 'Oh! Did you want it?'

TARGET replied: 'No! In view of your question.'

A La Carte Menu

The best thing about the Minestrone 'Milanese' Style, Spinach Dumplings, was that it was completely devoid of any oil.

The soup had been made completely of water, some vegetables and beans without any base at all.

As one would expect, the flavour of this soup was very mild ... almost unnoticeable, in fact.

Any Italian, trying to drink this rubbish, would cringe at the idea that it hailed from Milan, Italy.

This reviewer has been to Milan on a number of occasions and can assure **TARGET** Subscribers that this soup was a creation of some idiotic person, donning a white hat and parading around in order to resemble a cook.

Yuck!

As for the Ringo and Tat Pizza, it was on a par with the soup.

To describe the pizza is easy: It was undercooked in some parts and burned in other parts.

It tasted like no pizza that has ever been cooked in Italy or even in New York City where, **TARGET** was told, Mr Harlan Goldstein, the owner of this restaurant, lived before descending on the unsuspecting residents of the Hongkong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People's Republic of China (PRC).

What made this pizza especially bad was that the half-cooked dough did not have a sufficiency of tomato puree to camouflage the problems, inherent in the cooking process.

The Restaurant, Itself

Harlan's is a very presentable establishment which can seat about 180 patrons.

The tables are spaciouly arranged and the view of Victoria Harbour is, really, lovely.

The service is quite reasonable and the waiters and waitresses try to do their best.

According to Rana, this is a casual, fine-dining restaurant 'Where dining is an experience'.

This is a contradiction in terms because fine dining is supposed to be a restaurant where French food is served and, further, if it is 'fine dining', then, it cannot be casual.

However, **TARGET** will admit that suffering the food at Harlan's is an experience.

The music at this restaurant is terrible or, put another way, it was not **TARGET**'s cup of tea.

TARGET noted that nearly all of the 20 or so brave souls, eating at Harlan's on the day that this medium surveyed this restaurant, were European.

Perhaps, the Chinese know better than to try to eat at Harlan's.

(**TARGET** did not dare to consider ordering any wine and Rana did not suggest it, too. God only knows what kind of wine is being offered or how it is stored.)

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