

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

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

**Name of Restaurant**

Felix, The Peninsula Hongkong

**Address of Restaurant**

Salisbury Road, Tsimshatsui, Kowloon, Hongkong

**Date of Visit**

Thursday, July 24, 2008

**Category****TARGETs 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 - None	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor
General	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor

**Food**

Presentation	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor
Taste	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor

Quantity	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor
<b><u>Wine</u></b> (Weighted Toward Italian Wines)			
Choice	Extensive	Limited	Unbalanced
Cost	Reasonable	Unreasonable	Expensive
Storage of Wine	Good	Poor	Unknown
Expertise of Sommelier	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor

#### **Total Cost of Meal**

Very Expensive                      Moderately Expensive                      Very Reasonably Priced

#### **Name of Food and Beverage Manager**

Mr Oliver Schnatz

#### **Name of Chef**

Mr Florian Trento

#### **Comments**

Felix, the supposed up-market, trendy restaurant of the Peninsula Hotel (), this hotel, undoubtedly, being the queen of the elegant hotels of the Hongkong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People's Republic of China (PRC), should be closed down.

It is an absolute failure as a fine-dining restaurant; and, the food that is served, these days, could best be described as being fusion-confusion – in the extreme!

The first thing that the **TARGET** () team noted on entering this restaurant, on Thursday, July 24, at about 7:40 p.m., was the state of a dirty faded runner that stretched from the entrance of the restaurant to the dining area of this 160-seater food outlet.

This runner should have been thrown away some years past, in this medium's opinion.

It is unbelievable that this 5-star hotel does not, at least, get this runner washed ... or, perhaps, the hotel does wash it, from time to time, but the question is: When was the last time?

One positive aspect about this food outlet is the view that it offers of Hongkong Island across Victoria Harbour.

One is able, from one's seat in Felix, to admire the panoramic view of the Harbour: It is, truly, amazing; and, the trip to this restaurant is worth one's while if one wants to view this scene, only, the multi-coloured lights, reflecting off the near still waters, and the little boats, traversing the waters, is fascinating to behold.

But it is here that the positive aspects of this restaurant come to a screeching halt.

The service is nothing.

The food is nothing.

The cost of the food is outrageous, considering the muck that is dished up.

On the evening that **TARGET** () visited Felix, this was that which was ordered:

#### **Appetisers**

French Duck, Passion Fruit, Foie Gras, Port Wine  
\$HK320

Dungeness Crab Cake, Avocado, Jalapeno Remoulade  
\$HK190

#### **Main Courses**

Uni, Quail Egg, Lobster Risotto  
\$HK240

Tasmanian Salmon, White Asparagus, Wild Mushrooms  
\$HK360

With the above dishes, **TARGET** ordered the following wine, following a great deal of trouble in getting somebody to take this medium's order:

Vega-Sicilia Valbuena, Ribero del Duero, Spain, Vintage 2000  
\$HK2,600

### The Wine

It was excellent, its dark, ruby red colour was an immediate come-on.

This is a full-bodied wine which is unlikely to disappoint anybody who enjoys a good red.

The flavour of the wine is that of very ripe cherries, and it is as smooth, as the saying goes, as that of a baby's bottom (a little mixed metaphor, here).

If the food had been a patch on the wine, **TARGET** would have finished off the bottle, completely, but, the chair was hard – no cushions, at all – and, for one of the **TARGET** team, a Chinese female of 5 feet in height, her legs could only just reach the floor when seated.

This medium's team, on leaving the restaurant, offered half of bottle of this lovely wine to a group of 3 Mexican tourists who gladly accepted the gift, saying something to the effect that '*At least the wine will be good, thanks to the generosity of a stranger.*'

### The Food

The 2 appetisers were bland, without any defining characteristics.

One could not say that the appetisers were poor, but they were close to achieving that status.

The stuffed duck meat with foie gras was an interesting combination, but this reviewer would not care to eat it, again.

It tasted as though the duck meat was of the frozen variety, but one could not be absolutely certain.

The addition of the passion fruit, well ... fusion-confusion.

The crab cake was as it should have been and would have passed any test with flying colours – when it was first created, about one day or so earlier, in this medium's rough estimate.

Soft and soggy was the best way to describe this hopeless concoction.

The Main Courses were both disasters.

No saving grace, at all.

The risotto was so salty that it was inedible and had to be sent back to the kitchen.

When the second attempt came to the table, it was not quite as salty as the first version, but it should not have been called risotto although there were a few grains of cooked rice, buried under some white froth.

The Tasmanian Salmon, on the other hand, was not salty, at all – only half frozen.

For certain, the fish was not fresh – and it tasted as such, too.

The asparagus was, without question, straight out of a tin.

Two small bites ... and that was that.

None of the serving staff seemed to care that the food at **TARGET**'s table was not being eaten in its entirety, with only one or 2, small mouthfuls, having been sampled of each dish.

**TARGET** assumes that that which was this medium's experience was par for the course at Felix, the atmosphere of nonchalance of the serving staff, being quite acceptable, with nobody, seeming to be in charge.

The serving staff is of the calibre that one would expect to find at any one of the cheap, Wanchai bar-cum restaurants, these

days.

The chef at this restaurant, **TARGET** learned on leaving the outlet, is an American by the name of Mr Ashton Hall.

America is not known for fine cuisine, and, probably, never will be, but, presumably, an American chef is not as expensive to employ, these days, as, say, an experienced chef from a capital city of Europe.

Hence, no doubt, Mr Ashton Hall's employment contract was engrossed by the Peninsula Hotel's Management.

Obviously, Mr Ashton Hall cooks in the style to which he has become accustomed in his part of the world, which is probably quite acceptable for the run-of-the-mill, non-discriminatory American hamburger set.

Felix was not well patronised on the evening that this medium visited it; and, there is good reason for this state of affairs.

It may be noted that **TARGET** did not dare to order desert.

This was because, on offering half of the bottle of Vega-Sicilia Valbuena, Ribero del Duero to the Mexican trio, sitting behind this medium's table, and noting that one of the Mexican's was looking, quizzically, at a yellowish '*thing*', resting in the middle of a white plate, the receiver of the wine said something along the lines:

*'OK! I'll skip this thing – whatever it is supposed to be – and go straight to something good. Thanks a great deal. You (looking at this reviewer) are a life-saver.'*

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