

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

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

**COMMENTS ON DOMANI RISTORANTE AT PACIFIC PLACE;
THE GENERAL MANAGER HAS HIS SAY**

When **TARGET** () revisited Domani Ristorante at Pacific Place on Monday, March 23, 2009, it was because 2 restaurant reviewers of this medium were hungry, having not eaten very much for most of the day.

On leaving Domani, **TARGET**'s 2 reviewers were, still, hungry – because the food at this pretentious Italian, stand-alone restaurant was simply terrible on the night of this medium's visit.

In **TARGET** Intelligence Report, Volume XI, Number 61, at Pages 5 to 11, the events of the day were reported accurately, starting with a restaurant review of Osteria, the newest Italian restaurant, located at the old coffee shop of Holiday Inn, Golden Mile, Tsimshatsui, Kowloon, and ending at Domani at Pacific Place, with this medium, telling the Manageress on exiting the eatery:

'It (the meal) is the worst example of Italian food that has ever graced a table.'

On Monday, April 20, 2009, **TARGET** received an email, purported to have been sent by Mr Danilo Nicoletti, the General Manager of Domani.

It has, always, been this medium's policy to permit all readers of **TARGET** to have their opinions, published without comment, provided of that that which they wrote is not contrary to the laws of the Hongkong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China.

And so, in keeping with **TARGET**'s editorial policy, the following is a verbatim copy of the email, dated Monday, April 20, 2009, purported to have been penned by the General Manager of Domani, Mr Danilo Nicoletti, and sent at 9.00 p.m.:

'Dear Target,

'we received your comments posted on Target after coming back from Italy this morning.

'It was so sad hearing that your last experience at Domani has been so disappointing from your point of view. Regarding myself, Mr. Danilo Nicoletti, General Manager of Domani, I was about leaving for business trip that night and within those five minutes I showed up and greet a very old friend and guest of

mine, I did not see you at the restaurant unfortunately.

'All I wanted to say to you with this was just that we do have four Italian Chefs in our kitchen, that night were all on duty including our Domani Executive Chef, Mr. Michele Bernacchia which has been working as Sous Chef in two starred restaurant "Uliassi" for thirteen years before Domani.

'And we do not believe that my Assistant Manager would have suggested you wasted food from lunch, really strange to hear that from your magazine, it could have just been a mis-understanding.

'I would be really happy if you can contact me at your earlier convenience so you and I can share comments and points of view, in order to give you a better picture of ourself since you do not have in hand any reasonable knowledge of our restaurant and, obviously, you are acting to a very bad discrimination on our image.

'Warm Regards,

*Danilo Nicoletti
General Manager
Domani Ristorante
Level 4, Pacific Place
88 Queensway
Admiralty, Hong Kong*

*Tel: 2111 1197 Fax: 2111 1187
info@domani.hk'*

To be fair to Domani, this is that which was written in **TARGET** Intelligence Report, Volume XI, Number 61, at Pages 9 -11, relating to this restaurant:

'Domani: A Return

*'On the same day of the visit to Holiday Inn Golden Mile, having not eaten very much at 'Hysteria', **TARGET** decided to have a return visit to Domani at Pacific Place in order to eat dinner.*

'The first time that this medium visited this restaurant was on Thursday, November 13, 2008, just 5 days after it had opened for business.

*'The original review of this restaurant was very positive, but **TARGET**, also, stated, in its review, that it would be interesting to learn how the restaurant fared in the succeeding 6 months.*

'Well, the European chefs have all disappeared, it seems, and, in their wake, there are some Chinese, quick-order cooks who are messing about in the open kitchen, trying to follow the recipes, left behind by the departed chefs.

'As with Osteria, the food at Domani is, today, terrible.

'It is, indeed, difficult to know which of the 2 restaurants was the better of what is, surely, some of the HKSAR's worst examples of Italian-styled cuisine in the territory.

'The waiters at Domani did not even know the difference between one dish and another, mistaking one for the other, in point of fact.

'The female manageress, on realising that something was terribly wrong, came over and explained that some of the 'special' from the luncheon menu was still available so that the meat could be ground up in order to make a kind of Spaghetti Bolognese.

*'It was ordered, more as a joke than anything else, because **TARGET**'s waiter thought that Spaghetti Bolognese was the same as Spaghetti Vongole.*

'It was a horrible error to order the leftovers, ground up to resemble Spaghetti Bolognese: It was the worst of the worst.

*'In **TARGET** Intelligence Report, Volume X, Number 223, at Page 10, this reviewer ended the report on Domani as follows:*

"A great deal of thought has gone into this restaurant and one notes that there were 5 European cooks, teaching Chinese assistants how to do this and that.

“It seems quite likely that, after a while, some or all of these Europeans will vanish from the scene, leaving the Chinese to dish up the food.

“For the time being, however, the Chinese are the students of the Europeans who appear to be teaching formula cooking.

*“And this, in **TARGET**’s opinion, is a mistake because it may well detract from creativity in the future.*

*“Domani is not a fusion restaurant, at least, not at this time, but it could become such an ‘animal’ if some of **TARGET**’s fears become a reality.”*

*‘Well, **TARGET**’s fears have been realised – sadly.*

‘There are no chefs at Domani, at all, and there is nobody, supervising the hash-house, with some Chinese people, trying to pretend to be Italian chefs.

*‘Even the General Manager, Mr Danilo Nicoletti, was not present on the day of **TARGET**’s visit although he did make a 5-minute appearance at about 7:30 p.m. before he shot off for some other clime.*

*‘This medium will not even try to describe the rubbish food at this restaurant, but sum it up by a passing remark to the Manageress who, on the way out of the door, said ‘I know you did not like the food’ to which **TARGET** responded: ‘It is the worst example of Italian food that has ever graced a table.’*

*‘**TARGET** will, never, return to Domani and, probably, Management of this eatery will be happy to read this last sentence.*

‘Subscribers have been warned!!!’

What **TARGET** omitted in its report, with regard to the last review of Domani, was that which took place on entering the restaurant at about 6:30 p.m.

In addition, there were other little things that took place, things that, at the time, appeared to be of little importance and so were not mentioned.

Today, however, it appears that this medium had been more than a little remiss and determines to correct the balance by including all that occurred, during the one-hour of horror at Domani Ristorante.

It would be unfair to Domani and to its Italian General Manager of today, Mr Danilo Nicoletti, not to include those little things that formed the rich fabric of the evening as well as the skit that took place on entering the restaurant.

The hostess, who welcomed **TARGET**’s 2 food reviewers when entering Domani, asked, first, whether or not the visit was intended for drinks, only, or to eat dinner.

On being told that **TARGET**’s duo would be eating dinner, the hostess asked a number of questions.

The following is, approximately, the dialogue that transpired:

Hostess: May I have your name, please?

TARGET: Sacklyn, Raymonde Sacklyn.

Hostess: Thank you. (At this point, the hostess, without writing down anything, proceeded to try to show **TARGET**’s reviewers to a table.)

TARGET: Aren’t you going to write down my name? Can you spell it?

Hostess: Oh! What was your name, again?

TARGET: Sacklyn, Raymonde Sacklyn

Hostess: Thank you. (Once again, the hostess, without writing down anything, proceeded to try to show **TARGET** reviewers to a table.)

TARGET: Do you remember my name? Can you spell my name?

Hostess: Yes

TARGET: Would you please tell me my name, then?

Hostess: Mr Seksomething

TARGET: Can you spell it?

Hostess: What’s your name, again? (But, once again, she showed no intention to write anything down, not even having a pen or pencil in her hand.)

TARGET: If you never had any intention to write down my name, for what reason did you ask for it?

Hostess: (Getting a little visible upset at being taken to task) Please come this way.

What is very telling about the above dialogue that transpired between **TARGET** and Domani's hostess is that, if the hostesses do not record the names of people, visiting the restaurant, how can Management ever hope to know who came and at what time?

In effect, one has to conclude from the events that took place on the evening of **TARGET**'s visit is that Management of this restaurant, the General Manager of which is Mr Danilo Nicoletti, does not care to learn the names of the guests who wander into the restaurant without having a reservation.

Alternatively, Management is remiss in training some or all of the restaurant's staff.

Further, **TARGET** considers that the actions of the hostess to have been insulting to Mr Raymonde Sacklyn and/or to any and all other guest, unknown to the hostess.

In closing, it appears that Mr Danilo Nicoletti's statements fly in the face of that which was told to **TARGET** on the evening that he, by his own admission, was not in attendance.

TARGET was told by the Manageress and by the waiter, who was trying to look after this medium's table, that only 'Chinese boys' were in the kitchen on the night of this medium's impromptu visit.

The waiter, also, stated that the European chef (singular) was 'on holiday'.

This medium will say no more about this matter and leave Subscribers to come to their own determinations about Domani, its General Manager, et sequentia.

After all, fair is fair.

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.*