

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

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

Name of Restaurant

Thai Basil

Address of Restaurant

Shop LG001, Pacific Place, Admiralty, Hongkong

Date of Visit

Tuesday, June 16 2009

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

Wine

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
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General Manager

Mr Rudy Lau

Name of Executive Chef

Mr Chu Kwok Wah ()

Comments

Thai Basil is one of the relatively new restaurants to have opened on the Ground Floor of Pacific Place, Admiralty, Hongkong Island.

It is not a fine-dining establishment by any stretch of the imagination and it makes no pretensions of being such.

However, there is value for money in this stand-alone eatery that claims to specialise in Thai cuisine.

TARGET () visited That Basil on Tuesday, June 16, 2009, at about 7:15 p.m., and, although, initially, this medium was not exactly enthralled by the first impression of the 110-seater restaurant, things warmed up as quickly as the first course was presented on the bare black, wooden table.

This was that which was ordered on that evening:

Soup

pumpkin and ginger
coconut milk and pumpkin seeds

\$58

Salad

char-grilled salmon
green mango, green onion and celery root broth

\$78

Noodle Soup

seafood laksa ho fan
spicy coconut broth, prawns, calamari, scallops, crispy garlic and thai basil

\$88

Short Order

char-grilled pork neck
roasted rice tamarind chilli dipping sauce

\$85

Sweets
purple sticky rice
fresh mango, coconut cream and hazelnut praline

\$48

steamed pumpkin custard
pandan leaf ice-cream

\$39

Long Drinks
thai sugar cane
fresh sugar cane juice-mint-lime-lemongrass
\$45

fresh thai lime soda
fresh lime-soda
\$39

All of the dishes were spicy in varying degrees, but it was the Grilled Salmon Salad that was the spiciest of them all, so spicy, in fact, that this reviewer, after the first few mouthfuls, found it impossible to continue to sample the dish.

That is not to suggest that there was anything wrong with the salad, but **TARGET** just is not accustomed to tasting such very 'hot' food.

It comprised bean sprouts, pieces of salmon, onion, peanuts and basil.

The combination of foods was good, but the copious quantities of chili, mixed in with them, made it impossible for **TARGET** to tolerate.

That is, however, no fault of the restaurant.

The Pumpkin and Ginger Soup was the least spicy of all of the dishes ordered.

It was a pleasure to taste it since, actually, it was an old-fashioned, vegetable soup, boiled for an extraordinary long period of time, to which some ginger had been added to a pumpkin base.

It lacked any oil, at all – which was very good news.

At this point, it should be mentioned that this restaurant prides itself on not using any **monosodium glutamate (MSG)**.

Turning to the Grilled Pork Neck, well, this, strictly speaking, is not Thai cuisine, at all, but Cantonese food with a Thai-matching, spicy sauce, dressing it up to look like a Thai dish.

Be that as it may, it was delicious.

Again, there was no fat in this dish and the pork was, clearly, quite fresh.

As for the Seafood Laksa, it is doubtful that this was a Thai dish, also, but it was quite good.

It comprised noodles in chicken-based soup, to which had been added a generous assortment of seafood – squid, shrimps, scallops, clams, etc.

It was mildly spicy, but quite edible, even for **TARGET**'s palate.

Up to this point, it had been noted that the presentation of the dishes had little to commend them, but this was to change when the desserts appeared on the table.

If the Pumpkin Custard and/or the Purple Sticky Rice had been served in any 5-star restaurant, it would have been a delight to the eyes.

At Thai Basil, not only was the presentation exciting, but the flavours of the desserts were on a par with the presentation.

The Restaurant

The tables in Thai Basil are placed quite close together, the management, obviously, wanting to make use of every square inch of space.

There are no soft furnishings so that, when the restaurant is full, as it was last Tuesday night, it is difficult to hold a meaningful conversation.

Clearly, this is not the place to bring one's girlfriend with the idea of enjoying a romantic interlude, however, if one wants a reasonable meal at a reasonable price – for this part of town, of course – Thai Basil is not a poor choice.

TARGET scanned the wine list, but there was nothing of any note that was worth ordering.

Then, again, this is not the place to order high-class wine.

As for the service, well, it was not, exactly, the best, but the young boys and girls did their best, of that this medium was certain.

The tables are not cleaned very well and the chairs hold the residue of past meals, not having been wiped away.

The restaurant could well be described as an up-market dai pai dong – side-street, open kiosk eateries.

This restaurant is owned by the Maxim's Group of Restaurants and it looks as though it is a winner.

It is not pretentious and it makes no overtures of being such.

In the evenings, it is pretty packed.

There must be a reason for this.

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