

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

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

Name of Restaurant

W52

Address of Restaurant

No. 52, Wyndham Street, Central, Hongkong

Date of Visit

Monday, August 2, 2010

Category**TARGETs Rating****Service**

First Impression -	Questionable	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

Wine

Choice	Extensive	Limited	Unbalanced
Cost	Reasonable	Unreasonable	Expensive
Storage of Wine	Good	Poor	Unknown
Expertise of Sommelier	Excellent	Acceptable	None

Total Cost of Meal

Very Expensive	Moderately Expensive	Very Reasonably Priced
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Name of Restaurant Manager

Mr Robert J Ho

Name of Executive Chef

Mr Franscesci Berardinelli

Comments

The restaurant, W52, could aptly be described as a rose among the thorns.

This is because it is a restaurant just on the outskirts of one of the filthiest and grottiest places in Central Hongkong – Lan Kwai Fong ().

As **TARGET** () has stated, umpteen times in the past, Lan Kwai Fong is resplendent, just about every evening, with European drunks, Chinese and European prostitutes, both male and female, all sitting around, seemingly waiting for something to happen, or, if they are too far gone, having imbibed too much alcohol, they sit around on stools or outside the public toilet, in a complete stupor.

Having said all of the above, the property in this slum is among the most-expensive in the Hongkong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People's Republic of China (PRC).

Which just goes to prove that sex sells and alcohol dulls the senses.

But there are a few restaurants, in and around this horrible area, well worth a visit if one is willing to brave the above-mentioned.

W52 was the object, last Monday night, of **TARGET**'s peripatetic duo of food reviewers.

The restaurant is located at Number 52, Wyndham Street, exactly opposite the front entrance of LKF Hotel.

On entering the ground floor of W52, one realised that the place has the appearance of little more than one of the many horrible bars of Lan Kwai Fong although it is much cleaner than most, by all outward appearances, but, after being asked by a Filipina hostess whether or not **TARGET** was coming to eat dinner or just have a drink, it was into one of the slowest lifts, ever produced in the history of the world, to the second floor.

There, the entire outward aspect of W52 changed, markedly, and, on alighting from the lift's 2-minute, slow-motion journey up just one floor, one found oneself in a very neat little restaurant which, in a pinch, could accommodate about 50 diners, at most.

There is little to no soft furnishings in this restaurant so that noise bounces off the walls and it is difficult to have a conversation of any note.

After studying the menu*, this was that which **TARGET** ordered for the evening:

Starters

Risotto alla Milanese/Midollo e Salsa al Vine Milanese Style
Risotto with bone marrow and wine sauce

\$HK105 per half portion

Gnocchi di Pasta al Nero/Ragout di Fruiti di Mare
Squid with Potato Gnocchi/Seafood Ragout

\$HK115 per half portion

Main Courses

Tagliata di Angus Grigliata/Funghi Trifolali
Grilled Sliced Black Angus Beef with Sautéed Spring Mushrooms

\$315

Merluzzo Gigante/Aceto Balsamico/Pomodorini
Oven Broiled Black Cod Fish/Balsamic Vinegar/Cherry Tomatoes

\$HK225

Desserts

Mille Foglie al Marsala ed Amaretti
Crispy “Mille Foglie”/Marsala Sabayon and Amaretti

\$HK95

Torta Fresca di Mascarpone e Mango
Mango and Mascarpone Cheese Cake

\$HK95

(*All spelling mistakes of the menu are to be credited to the Italian owner of W52)

With the above, the following 2 glasses of wine were ordered:

Il Nero di Casanova 1GT, La Sprietta, Tuscany 2007
\$HK80 per glass

Perrier Jouët Grand Brut
\$HK145 per glass

This medium, also, studied the wine list and was pleasantly surprised to find, all in all, that the prices were reasonable.

TARGET's waiter for the evening was asked, on ordering the glasses of wine, how long the wine bottles had been opened.

The answer came back that the bottles had been opened in the early afternoon, but, having said that, he said: *‘If the wine is not good, I shall, of course, open a new bottle for you.’*

Fair enough.

The wine, by the way, was fine.

The Food

Not one of the dishes was unacceptable.

Not one of the dishes was not presented without the flare of an accomplished chef.

When enquired as to the chef for the evening, it was discovered that he was a Chinese gentleman who had studied under the Italian owner of the restaurant.

The owner of W52 is said to be Mr Francesco Berardinelli who is on holiday in Europe, this month (as is common during the lazy summer months of this part of the world).

The chef of last Monday was Mr Kapy Yu.

The first 2 courses, the starters, were excellent although, during **TARGET**'s journey through Tuscany, the gnocchi of this type had never been encountered.

The good thing about the risotto was that it had not been overcooked and the stock, used in its preparation, was really mouth-watering.

As for the main courses, the Angus beef and the black cod, it was difficult to believe that an improvement would have been possible.

While the Champagne went down well with the starters, the Sangiovese (Il Nero di Casanova 1GT, La Sprietta, Tuscany 2007) was an excellent choice for the beef although, perhaps, a little overpowering for the cod.

A word about presentation is in order, at this point of this review, because it was, really, outstanding.

As everybody knows, good food should look good on the table, smell good on the table, and taste good in one's mouth.

The dishes, chosen by **TARGET** at W52, last Monday, had all of the necessary attributes of a fine meal.

In fact, this medium would go as far as to state that the dishes could compare with any and all, so-called, fine-dining establishment in 5-star hotels of the HKSAR – if not better.

As for the desserts, don't have them – because they are terribly unhealthy.

They are sweet and one smell is equivalent to about 1,000 calories.

But this reviewer found it difficult not to eat.

And, in about 2 minutes, they were devoured in their entirety.

The Service

Surprisingly for this section of Central Hongkong, the service was, really, par excellence.

Some of the staff members, **TARGET** discovered, had worked at other restaurants that make claims of being among the best in the territory, but these former staff members of those restaurants determined otherwise and decided to change venues.

That which endeared W52 to this reviewer was the fact that, as soon as one's water glass was half empty, along came somebody to top it up.

The restaurant is spotless as are the facilities.

The kitchen, surprisingly, is on the third floor of the building that houses W52, and a smallish, special food lift has been installed so that the food, piping hot, comes directly from the kitchen to the dining room.

No messing about here.

On a negative note, perhaps, is that, if one has noisy neighbours, it can be a little disconcerting.

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