

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

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

Name of Restaurant

The Drawing Room

Address of Restaurant

Numbers 1-5, Irving Street, Causeway Bay, Hongkong

Date of Visit

Wednesday, August 25, 2010

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	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor
General	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor

Food

Presentation	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor
Taste	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor
Quantity	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor

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

Total Cost of Meal

Very Expensive Moderately Expensive **Very Reasonably Priced**

Name of Restaurant Manager

None

Name of Executive Chef

Mr Roland Schuller

Comments

If one were to sneeze or, alternatively, to look toward the impressive edifice of the Regal Hongkong Hotel in Causeway Bay, Hongkong Island, while walking down Irving Street, it is quite likely that one would have missed one of the most-charming little, free-standing restaurants in the 416 square miles that constitute the Hongkong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China.

It is called, The Drawing Room.

Irving Street is a relatively small street, running parallel to the Regal Hongkong Hotel.

TARGET () visited The Drawing Room at about 7 p.m. on Wednesday, August 25, 2010, on an extremely hot and humid evening.

On entering the 52-seater restaurant, the Restaurant Manager, Mr Kevin Yu, seeing that this reviewer was perspiring profusely, handed, very quickly, a white linen napkin and ushered **TARGET**'s employee toward the facilities, permitting this hard-working journalist to refresh himself.

(Mr Kevin Yu did not know or recognise **TARGET**'s reviewer and, even during the entire meal, he had no idea that The Drawing Room was about to go under this medium's microscope.)

Splash, splash, splash! And this reviewer recovered from the ordeal of locating the restaurant.

Then, it was down to business: The ordering of a nice, cold bottle of Champagne: De Sousa Blanc de Blanc (the term, 'blanc de blanc', for those who may not know, means that the sparkling wine is made exclusively of the Chardonnay grape).

Down went the first glass ... then, the second ... then, the third.

It was wonderfully smooth and, although this reviewer had never tried this particular Champagne in the past, the oversight shall not be repeated.

By the way, for this splendid bottle of Champagne, the cost was \$HK800.

Refreshed and cool, the next thing was to order some food.

The following were the 2 meals of the evening:

4 Course Tasting Menu

Marinated Lobster Salad with Mustard and Grapefruit

Tagliolini with Fresh Sea Urchin and Chanterelle Mushrooms

*Colorado Lamb Rack with Braised Lamb Neck on
Artichoke Purée and Baby Fennel Gratin*

Caffe Pasticcini

HK\$620 per person

Plus 10% Service Charge

5 Course Tasting Menu

Scampi Carpaccio with Yellow Mushrooms and Burrata Cheese

Linguine with Canarian Island Red Prawn and Crispy Artichokes

*Roasted Iberian Suckling Pig
with Apricot Marmalade and Sautéed Scarola*

Pan Fried Brioche with Goat Cheese Ice Cream

Caffè Pasticcini

HK\$780 per person

Plus 10% Service Charge

While awaiting for the food to arrive, **TARGET** ordered a bottle of Pio Cesare Barolo, Vintage 2005, at \$HK880, and had it decanted in order to allow this full-bodied, red wine, made in the area around Barolo in northwestern Italy, 'to breathe' as they say.

Barolo, this reviewer determined, would go well with the main dish of the 5 Course Tasting Menu – the suckling pig from Iberia – as well as the lamb from Colorado on the 4 Course Tasting Menu.

Barolo has a distinctive flavour of almonds with a touch of pepper – the spice of life.

The 150-minute meal – **TARGET** left the restaurant at about 9:45 p.m. – necessitated the tasting of 8 separate dishes and, while they were all, excellent, perhaps the 2 most-interesting ones were the suckling pig from Iberia and the Colorado lamb.

The suckling pig was, in this reviewer's opinion, an admixture of Asian, Spanish, and Italian cuisine, either by accident or design.

There was nothing wrong with the taste or appearance of the 2, smallish pieces of pork, but it was difficult to recommend this dish unless one enjoys fatty food.

In **TARGET**'s opinion, Cantonese suckling pig – yew djew () – is much tastier and is, usually, less fatty than that which was served at The Drawing Room on this medium's visit.

As for the Colorado lamb, the flavour of the meat was not very pronounced and one could not help but compare it with the more-succulent lamb of the Antipodes, or from the Welsh hills, for that matter.

All of the other dishes were excellent, however; no criticism at all.

When the Executive Chef and part-owner of The Drawing Room, Mr Roland Schuller, made the rounds of the restaurant, **TARGET**'s comments about the main courses were passed to him and, rather than resort to any excuses, as some chefs are prone to do, this Austrian chef accepted the criticism and tended to agree with it, at least in part.

Delightful!

The impartial exchange of ideas is, always, the prerequisite to friendship, is it not?

Other than the few comments about the 2 main courses, one could not find fault with any of the other dishes, except, perhaps, that this one was a little sweet and that one was a little too heavy.

But that is a matter of individual taste.

The Ambiance

The Drawing Room is a very tastefully presented, fine-dining establishment that could rival quite a number of fine-dining establishments in a number of 5-star hotels.

The tables are not close together and the service could not be improved.

The serving staff goes out of its way, it seems, to make all patrons comfortable.

The cost of a meal – a tasting meal, that is – is very reasonable, as is only too obvious – \$HK620 to \$HK780 per person.

The wine list is extensive and very interesting, with a wide selection from many producers in quite a number of parts of the world.

Due to the quality of the cooking as well as the quality of the raw produce, providing that Mr Roland Schuller does not sell out, this eatery is likely to be operating for a long period of time.

It is a pity, actually, that this reviewer is unlikely to return to The Drawing Room, but, as everybody knows: Duty calls.

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