

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

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

Name of Restaurant

La Brasserie, Macro Polo Gateway

Address of Restaurant

No. 13, Canton Road, Tsimshatsui, Kowloon, Hongkong

Date of Visit

Tuesday, January 4, 2011

CategoryTARGETs RatingService

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

Wine - Not Ordered

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**

Name of Food and Beverage Manager

Mr Angus Cheng

Name of Executive Chef

Mr Tom Samranjit

Comments

Since 1983, in what used to be known as Marco Polo Hotel, now known as Marco Polo Gateway, La Brasserie has been open for business.

The food outlet of this 28, year-old hotel is, unashamedly, that which the name suggests: A French-styled brasserie, in short and in the English language, a restaurant-cum-bar, serving a wide range of dishes.

In days of yore, La Brasserie, always, employed a French (or, at least, a European) chef. Not today, however.

Today, the head cook is a Thai gentleman by the name of Mr Tom Samranjit whose official title is Executive Chef of La Brasserie as well as doubling as the head man in the catering division of Marco Polo Gateway.

(Talk about saving money.)

But diners, who are not au fait with the goings-on at La Brasserie, would not be able to spot the difference between La Brasserie of yesteryear and La Brasserie of today – because the restaurant is as good, today, as it was ‘yesterday’.

TARGET () returned to La Brasserie on Tuesday, January 4, 2011, at about 7:30 pm after an absence of at least 2 years in order to ascertain what had happened to this haunt of many Europeans of many years past at the ‘gateway’ – excuse the pun – of Tsimshatsui, Kowloon.

This was the menu that was chosen on that memorable Tuesday night:

Flambeè Lobster with Cognac and Bisque
(aka Flambeè Lobster Bisque with Cognac)
\$HK110

Smoked Herring and Potato Salad
\$HK110

Marinières with White Wine and Shallots
\$HK220

Whole Dover Sole with Almonds and Butter and Garlic Vegetables
\$HK388

Louis **Roederer is the house, pouring Champagne at \$HK130 per generous glass.**

The Food

The first course – the Lobster Bisque – is finished at the side of one’s table: It was as good as it gets. It could not have been better and the chunks of sweet lobster meat were liberally added.

The Smoked Herring and Potato Salad was more salad than smoked herring, with the kitchen, only allotting 3, thin pieces of smoked herring per salad.

It was, by far, the worst dish of the meal although, to be absolutely fair, there was little that was wrong with it, other than the herring pieces disappeared much too quickly. It would have been nice if there had been at least 8 pieces of fish meat.

Which brings this medium to the main courses.

The Moules Marinières, which is the correct name for the '*Marinières with White Wine and Shallots*', as this dish was named on the menu, was another winner and, clearly, whoever had cooked it, had learned the art of the way in which the French cook this dish to a tee.

The mussels were obviously fresh, their taste, being slightly sweet. The addition of the white wine, in which the marine mollusc had been poached, lent well to the flavour of the entire dish.

The best course of the evening was, without question, the Dover Sole, however.

When it comes to a nationality that can cook fish, the Asians are difficult to beat.

This was made only too evident on the evening that **TARGET** () revisited La Brasserie at Marco Polo Gateway.

What was exceptional about the fish course was the timing of the cooking process and the fact that this bottom fish had neither been dried out nor had been undercooked to the extent that its meat was '*sweating*' due to a cook's stupidity in not preheating the frying dish – or whatever was used – prior to placing the fish in it, so that the actual cooking process was short, but sufficient.

No dessert was ordered (this reviewer has been ordered to lose weight).

This restaurant that seats about 100 customers used to be full to overflowing, but on the night that **TARGET** visited it, only a handful of customers was present.

This is a pity because, in the opinion of this reviewer, one obtains good value for money at this food outlet.

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