

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

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

Name of Restaurant

Gold by Harlan Goldstein

Address of Restaurant

2/Floor, LKF Tower, No. 33, Wyndham Street, Central, Hongkong

Date of Visit

Wednesday, February 9, 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 - None	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor
General	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor

Food

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

**Wine - Not Selected**

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**

Nil

**Name of Executive Chef**

Mr Harlan Goldstein

**Comments**

If one is very adventurous and does not mind, walking through what could only be described as a huge, open-air ashtray, then a visit to one of the newest restaurant creations of Mr Harlan Goldstein should constrain any further notions of culinary adventures at Lan Kwai Fong.

In brief, the food in this restaurant is terrible – and terribly expensive, all things considered.

The worst aspect of Gold by Harlan Goldstein is the ambiance: At this 80-seater restaurant, which is noisy and rambunctious, with the serving staff, completely ignorant of that which they were supposed to be doing, one cannot wait to leave.

At least, that was **TARGET**'s feeling after about 2 hours of agony.

Also, the cook in charge is a born liar – at least, the one that was serving **TARGET**'s team on February 9, 2011, at 6:30 p.m. was a liar of the first order. The trouble was that he was a stupid one.

The following was the tasting menu, suggested by the cook on duty on the day of **TARGET**'s visit:

**Tasting Menu Number One**

*Japanese King Crab Salad with Orange and Salad*

*Minestrone*

*Clam Spaghetti*

*Slow Cooked Scottish Salmon*

**Tasting Menu Number Two**

*Ham with Melon, Rocket and Honey*

*Seafood Soup*

*Wild Boar Fettuccini*

*Slow Cooked Colorado Lamb*

*\$HK780 per person*

**Tasting Menu Number One**

When the ice-cold, Japanese King Crab Salad was first served, it was discovered that it was laced, heavily, with Tabasco, or some substitute for this Louisiana hot sauce.

The dish was completely inedible.

When the kitchen was told of the facts, another warmer salad, made of similar ingredients, graced the table – and that was very

edible, probably because it had been freshly made.

The soup, while being labelled as an Italian minestrone, was somebody else's creation of this Italian soup. It was a green-coloured broth with some ground-up vegetables to which some beans, which could not be identified, had been added.

As for the Clam Spaghetti, it was, as it was supposed to be, fresh clams, mixed into spaghetti which had not been overcooked.

The final dish of this Tasting Menu was the Slow-Cooked, Scottish Salmon.

It was terrible! The person, cooking this dish, should be thoroughly ashamed of himself/herself.

The problem with this fish dish was that, obviously, the slab of raw fish had been stored in a very cold refrigerator, probably for more than one day, so that, when it was cooked in an oven at a medium heat, the centre of the fish never cooked, completely. Then, adding insult to injury, an icy liquid oozed out of the centre of the poor thing, causing there to be a ring of a horrible white foam, formed around the fish meat where it met the plate.

When **TARGET** complained that the fish had no flavour and the centre of it was completely raw, a cook came along and said that there was nothing wrong with it: *'Slow-cooked fish is like this. It is not raw, only slow-cooked.'*

Ah, yes! Any excuse is better than none, Mr Harlan Goldstein.

### **Tasting Menu Number Two**

There is one thing that is consistent at Gold by Harlan Goldstein: Many of the dishes are insipid.

To jazz them up, his kitchen employs copious quantities of sauces, such as Tabasco.

The first course of Tasting Menu Number Two was the Ham and Melon.

There were just 2 pieces of thinly sliced ham, measuring about one inch square, and, true to the restaurant's form, they had been sliced so thinly that it was impossible to know how the ham tasted.

Quite clever, actually.

The Seafod Soup had been badly watered down, but the fish meat tasted as though it had been fresh at some time.

As for the Wild Boar Fettuccine, once again, Gold by Harlan Goldstein had surpassed itself: **TARGET** could neither find pieces of the wild pig nor could it be tasted.

Perhaps, it melted?

The final dish of Tasting Menu Number Two, the Slow-Cooked Colorado Lamb, was not slow-cooked at all.

It could not have been slow-cooked because it was about 45 percent fat, 20 percent bone, and about 35 percent meat.

The meat was tender, to be sure, but oven-cooked meat, even meat, cooked at a high temperature for a short period of time, would be tender.

When the cook came over to ask about the lamb, on seeing it on the plate, the fat, being carefully separated from the bones and the meat, he should have realised that, in 2 mouthfuls, the meal was over.

He did not because he was too busy making up excuses for his stupidity.

### **The Restaurant**

While the photographs on the Internet of Gold by Harlan Goldstein make the restaurant look elegant, in truth, it is just 3 long lines of tables, placed as closely as possible.

The tables, at one side of the restaurant, are so closely placed that, when a waiter has to serve the adjoining table, his or her bottom protrudes to the next table.

Not a pretty sight, actually.

There is no music, at least, not on the day of **TARGET**'s visit, but it would have made no difference, anyway, because the noise from the clatter of dishes to the yelping of young girls and boys, telling raucous and sometimes questionable jokes, permeated the entire room.

**TARGET** ordered a glass of Veuve Clique at \$HK188. The Champagne was flat. Which goes along with the entire restaurant – flat!

Gold by Harlan Goldstein has only been open for about 4 months – which is, truly, amazing!

Mr Harlan Goldstein was sacked from the operations of 3 restaurants in Hongkong in 2008, in which Mr Harlan Goldstein, at one time, had a 15-percent equity stake.

According to the Statements of Claim, attached to Writ of Summons, Numbers 845 and 1032 of 2008, Mr Harlan Goldstein's contract with the owning company of the restaurants, JJH Company Ltd, was terminated due to allegations of breaches of the terms of the employment contract.

Mr Harlan Goldstein has sued JJH Company Ltd in the High Court of the Hongkong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China (PRC) for Damages in the amount of \$HK3,163,303.03.

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