

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

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

Name of Restaurant

The Pawn

Address of Restaurant

No. 62, Johnston Road, Wanchai, Hongkong

Date of Visit

Monday, March 21, 2011

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

Wine - Not Sampled

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

Unknown

Name of Master Chef

Mr David Tamlyn

Comments

The location of The Pawn Restaurant, at Number 62, Johnston Road, Wanchai, the Hongkong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People's Republic of China (PRC), is perfect.

It faces a very large rubbish dump which abuts a concrete playground and the sounds of Wanchai, with its drunks, pimps and prostitutes lend colour to the listed building that houses The Pawn.

Sitting on the verandah of this restaurant, last Monday night at 6:45 pm, listening to the screeching sounds of the siren of an ambulance whiz by and the occasional scream of a lady of the night, one was reminded of the famous 1960 film: The World of Suzie Wong.

Even the ambiance of The Pawn is reminiscent of the stage settings which complemented the acting styles of Nancy Kwan and William Holden, the stars of this very popular film.

While one might enjoy looking at a rubbish dump and listening to the sounds of Wanchai, one is unlikely to enjoy eating at The Pawn, as **TARGET** () discovered last Monday night.

On scanning the dinner menu of last Monday, the following dishes were selected:

Starters

Seared Scallops with Green Pea Puree, Pork Sausage and Tomato Salsa
\$HK138

Deviled Chicken Livers with Bacon on Toast
\$HK98

Mains

Risotto with Wild Mushrooms, Shaved Parmesan and Rocket
\$HK202

*Hot Smoked Barbary Duck Breast, Roast Foie Gras, Rosit Potatoes,
Red Pepper Essence, Port Wine Jus*
\$HK248

Sides

Beetroot and Green Bean Salad
\$HK38

Buttered Peas
\$HK38

Desserts and Savouries

Apple and Blackberry Crumble, Custard Sauce
\$HK75

Strawberries, Clotted Cream, Vanilla Shortbread
\$HK75

The Pawn has a large selection of nondescript wines, covering a number of 11-inch by 8-inch pages and, aside from the majority of the Champagnes, this reviewer determined that it was too much of a gamble to try to imbibe uncharted, fermented grape juice.

Instead, a bottle of Perrier was ordered.

When a large transparent bottle of something appeared, the waiter said that it was Perrier Water.

That was a lie because it hailed from England, according to the bottle's label.

It turned out to be a bottle of Blenheim Palace Water from England, costing \$HK60.

The Starters

The first thing that **TARGET** noted when the 2 Starters were placed on the Verandah table was that the plates were cold, while the Starters were supposed to be hot dishes.

As it turned out, it did not matter very much because the Starters were inedible, anyway.

The scallops had been of the frozen variety. That could easily be confirmed by slicing open the marine bivalve mollusc and noting the water, seeping out of the dead flesh.

The poor things, obviously, had been taken straight out of a freezer or a very cold refrigerator and popped onto a cold frying pan, wok or something else.

To this, lots of pepper had been added.

The resulting concoction of cold scallops and pepper was tasteless.

As for the chicken livers, on close inspection, they were chicken livers, but a close inspection was required because, as with the scallop dish, they were tasteless, too, in spite of copious quantities of pepper, being applied by the Chinese, fast-order cook in the open kitchen of The Pawn.

When the waiter returned and saw that the 2 Starters had hardly been touched, he just said: '*Finished?*'

With that, he left the Verandah and returned, about 2 minutes later, with the second course.

The Mains

The risotto resembled Scottish porridge, made of rice instead of oats.

It, also, was insipid.

Missing from this pretender to the Italian dish was the shaved Parmesan Cheese, but the rocket vegetable was very visible because it hid a goodly portion of the '*porridge*'.

The duck dish was another loser of the first order of rubbish – which goes along well with the rubbish dump, obliquely opposite The Pawn.

The duck meat was, almost, completely raw; it was tough and one found it difficult even to slice the meat with a sharp knife; it was tasteless; and, it was almost cold.

As for the side dishes, these, too, were on a par with the other dishes – terrible!

The Desserts

The desserts were quite good, actually.

Of course, slicing up a couple of fresh strawberries and putting a dollop of cream, right out of a bottle, on the plate along with the strawberries takes little creativity from the kitchen people.

The Apple and Blackberry Crumble was, also, quite edible, but **TARGET** suspects that it was of the store-bought variety.

The Staff of The Pawn

Throughout the one hour that **TARGET**'s reviewing team was in The Pawn, most of the shabbily dressed serving staff was standing in the open kitchen, exchanging jokes with five Chinese men and women, dressed in white, not wearing any hats, and pretending to do the cooking.

Cleanliness is not a strong point of the serving and the cooking staff who, aside from scratching their hair, rubbing their noses, and answering mobile telephones as they played at being chefs, they did little else.

It appeared that none of the serving staff was a professional waiter/waitress and cared not a jot for the quality, appearance or taste of the dishes, placed before customers.

Not once was **TARGET** asked the reason that the first 2 courses were not eaten at all.

The best part of the evening was leaving the restaurant and going somewhere to get dinner.

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