

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

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

Name of Restaurant

Biergarten Fass

Address of Restaurant

No. 5, Hanoi Road, Tsimshatsui, Kowloon, Hongkong

Date of Visit

Saturday, April 9, 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

Nil

Name of Master Chef

Nil

Comments

The best thing about Fass is the friendliness of the Chinese man who, clearly, is the owner or part-owner, and the fact that the customers of this pretentious little restaurant all appeared to be very well-mannered and very considerate.

TARGET () visited Fass last Saturday night at 8:30 pm, having negotiated the path from the Mass Transit Railway exit, through a plethora of Indian, Filipina/Filipino and African natives, standing around the area, engaged in drinking beer on the sidewalks, chatting, telling jokes in their native languages, and, of course, there was a number of ladies of the night, looking for johns to pay them for their services of the supine position or whatever other position was requested by their customers.

Beirgarten, which is owned by the same company that operates Fass, is a sidewalk pub, selling beer (as the German name of the outlet suggests) and some small dishes. It is located on the ground floor of Number 5, Hanoi Road, Tsimshatsui, Kowloon, the Hongkong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People's Republic of China (PRC).

While the general area of these 2 food outlets was, until recently, not exactly the type of place that gentlemen and ladies would want to visit or, for that matter, the favourite venue that young lovers might consider for a romantic evening, actually, it has been upgraded quite considerably, unlike The Holiday Inn, Golden Mile, which continues, as it always has for many a year, looking very tired and in urgent need of a complete facelift – if that is possible.

On the evening that **TARGET** visited Fass, the following were the chosen dishes, selected from a very limited menu, which was an admixture of German and Italian dishes:

*Kartoffelcremesuppe mit Croutons –
Potato Cream Soup with Croutons
\$HK58*

*Nuernberger Sausages –
Served with Sauerkraut and Mashed Potatoes
\$HK98*

*Fafelspitz –
Prime Boiled Beef on Horseradish and Cranberry Sauce
\$HK145*

*Zuricher Geschnetzeltes –
Veal Fricassee in Zurich Style
with Cream of Mushroom and Grated Fried Potatoes
\$HK168*

The First Two Courses

The soup course turned out to be a thin gruel of something, vaguely resembling the taste of potatoes and cream.

There was no, real discernable taste to the gruel, but since the nomenclature was that of a potato soup, one had to give the kitchen staff the benefit of the doubt.

This is the type of soup that was popular in some restaurants of the 1960s when the majority of the residents of the British Crown Colony of Hongkong, as it was, then, known, knew little about any cuisine, other than Chinese food.

The soup was almost tasteless and it could have been mistaken for a myriad of broths.

Later on, as the various courses were presented, **TARGET** discovered that Fass uses potato powder in the preparation of most of the dishes.

That explained the reason for the mystery of the (German?) potato soup.

The sausages were, probably, authentic, but, again, the mashed potatoes were insipid, the result of using potato powder instead of the real thing.

The Main Courses

The beef dish and the veal dish both had one thing in common: They tasted very similar – that is to state that they were both tasteless.

Clearly, the beef and the veal had been of the frozen variety and the sauces, that were used to try to camouflage their indistinct tastes, failed to live up to expectations.

Also, the dishes were inedible.

For the veal course, the grated fried potatoes, because they had been made out of potato powder, as soon as one crushed the muck, there were the remnants of the uncooked powder.

With regard to the beef course, Fass had used fresh potatoes, the variety found mainly in the PRC. For this variety of potatoes, no matter how long one boiled them, they never soften, unlike Russet potatoes from Europe.

These dishes were absolute disaster areas.

TARGET did not order any desert or ordered any wine because, among other things, there was little from which to select.

The Restaurant's Ambiance

Fass is, though small, a charming little place, which can accommodate about 50 people, at most.

The staff is as attentive as untrained serving staff could be expected.

When **TARGET** was seated, for instance, the serving staff had not changed the cutlery, which had been used by the previous customers, and, when this was pointed out, the waitress, serving the table, apologised and changed the cutlery for a freshly washed set.

There were no condiments on the table so that, if one felt the need to season one's food, one was out of luck, completely.

When the owner (assumed) was asked whether or not there was a German chef in the kitchen, **TARGET**'s reviewers were told that, originally, a German person had assisted in the planning stage of the restaurant, but he had to leave Hongkong because he could not obtain a Work Visa.

What was striking about Fass was the camaraderie of the customers, all of whom were relatively young, ranging from about 19 years to about 45 years, and all of whom appeared to be very polite, clearly having had good family educations.

The owner of the establishment must have realised that something was anomalous with the presence of **TARGET**'s duo, but, being the Chinese gentleman that he is, he continued, doing his level best in spite of the obvious handicap that he was facing.

As a German-styled restaurant, Fass is a massive failure; and, it is unlikely to last for very long if it is aiming at producing the real McCoy.

The owner cannot know very much about food, its presentation and the manner in which to operate a money-spinning restaurant; he should, really, look for a partner with an intimate knowledge of the preparation of German cuisine or, alternatively, he might like to consider some other occupation.

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