

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

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

Name of Restaurant

Manzo Italian Steak House

Address of RestaurantShop 1104, 11th Floor, Times Square, No. 1, Matheson Street, Causeway,
HongkongDate of Visit

Thursday, August 11, 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 -- None Chosen

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 General Manager

Mr Roy Shek

Name of Chef de Cuisine

Mr Antonio Ferreira

Comments

Manzo Italian Steak House only opened at the end of July and, on a cursory inspection of the restaurant, one might be tempted to describe it as an immediate winner.

However, first appearances can often be misleading.

If this restaurant continues to sell half-rotten meat, even USDA Prime beef that smells and tastes as though it were fermented bean curd (), it will not last the season.

The reason that **TARGET** () states that it looked, initially, as though it could be a winner was because it was packed to the gills on Thursday, August 11, 2011; and, the reason that this medium states that it might be unable to last the season was because it was selling half-rotten, ribeye steaks on the day of this medium's visit – and some people do know the difference.

When **TARGET** booked a table at Manzo Italian Steak House, located on the 11th Floor of Times Square, Causeway Bay, this medium had no idea what to expect.

After all, what is an Italian steak house?

Well, if Manzo Italian Steak House is a typical example of a Tuscan steak house, then, one can understand the reason that the Italian electorate determined that Silvio Berlusconi should be Prime Minister of the country, a man who is not averse to paying tens of thousands of euros in order to get his rocks off – with underage girls!

Don't let your daughter close to this 75 year-old, dirty but very wealthy man, one is told in the mass media, these days.

When this medium visited Manzo Italian Steak House, it was standing room only at about 1 p.m.

This was that which was ordered on the day of **TARGET**'s visit:

First Course

Bollito Misto, Caramelised Onions, Beef Shank
\$HK68

Spinach and Ricotta Ravioli, Roasted Tomatoes
\$HK48

USDA Steak

Ribeye 14 ounces
\$HK258

Tenderloin 9 ounces
\$HK248

Tuscan Fries
\$HK48

Parmesan Stuffed Mushrooms
\$HK58

Dessert

Torta di Rocotta
\$HK68

Olio d'Oliva Cake
\$HK68

The Food

The first 2 courses went down reasonably well, the Bollito Misto, being a very heavy soup, copiously laden with beef flakes, made from the shank of a cow.

The Spinach and Ricotta Ravioli was a little too dry, but it was tasty, nevertheless.

Because of the manner of the service of this restaurant, at about the time that the first 2 courses had been devoured, the suggestion was fermenting in this reviewer's mind that this restaurant could well be described as an up-market, fast-food joint.

As the meal progressed, this suggestion was proved as being fact.

With the table, having been cleared of the dishes of the soup and the ravioli course, suddenly, along came some French Fries, under the name of Tuscan Fries.

The difference between French Fries and Tuscan Fries, it appears, is that, in respect of the latter-mentioned, they are heavily infused with rosemary and salt.

Then, along came the inedible Parmesan Stuffed Mushrooms, almost completely dried out and without any flavour at all.

Where was the stuffing?

And where were the steaks?

About 8 minutes later, the steaks were served on the table.

The ribeye steak, which was supposed to have been medium rare, was raw.

It was sent back to the kitchen for a second attempt on the hot grill.

When it was returned to the table, it had been recooked in accordance with that which was requested, but it smelled strangely as though it were fermented tofu.

A waitress was called over and **TARGET** reported that something appeared to be wrong with the steak and, as such, it could not be eaten.

The waitress suggested that the fresh horseradish was the reason for the smelly meat.

She took it away and presented it to the restaurant Manager, Mr Roy Shek, who, in turn, asked the Italian chef for his opinion.

Unable to ascribe blame to the fresh horseradish, the chef decided that something had gone wrong at the ageing process of the meat.

It had been admitted, therefore, that the meat was half rotten.

Yuk!

As for the Tenderloin, there was absolutely nothing wrong with it and it was devoured, in its entirety, although to be nitpicking, it had been ordered to be cooked medium and it came overcooked.

The 2 deserts were quite good and little could be said of them.

The Restaurant, Itself

Manzo Italian Steak House can seat about 100 people, but the tables are packed, very close together.

When a waiter is taking an order from patrons at one table, therefore, his arse is likely to be staring at the people at the abutting table – in the face.

Which is not a very pretty sight.

If one wants to have some bread at the table with one's soup, one has to request it!

The service staff is inadequate and, for the most part, untrained and sloppy.

There is music, somewhere up there in the ceiling, but because of the lack of any soft furnishings and the clatter of plates and knives and forks, the sounds of any music is obliterated, completely.

The reason that this restaurant is popular, today, is likely to be that, relative to other steak houses, the prices are inexpensive.

One recalls the idiom: You pay for what you get.

It is highly unlikely that the prices will stay at the present levels – unless, of course, Management continues to sell half-rotten meat to patrons.

Manzo Italian Steak House will never make it as a fine-dining establishment and it is unlikely, ever, to receive honours for its cuisine from anybody or any rating agency.

Because the restaurant has only been open for less than one month, it is still going through its teething problems, one supposes, but the present 'mess' is unlikely to endear it to serious people who like to dig into a luscious chunk of meat.

Restaurants in Hongkong come and go almost as quickly as one changes one's knickers: This restaurant will have to put its act together if it wants to stay the course.

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