

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

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

Name of Restaurant

ROKA

Address of Restaurant

Shop 2, LG1, Pacific Place, No. 88, Queensway, Admiralty, Hongkong

Date of Visit

Sunday, August 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 -- Unable To Hear	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor
General	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor

Food

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

Wine -- Unknown

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 Restaurant Manager

Mr Ricky Ng

Name of Executive Chef

Mr Patrick H. Zepho

Comments

The capital letter, 'R', stands for the restaurant, called ROKA.

The capital letter, 'R', also stands for RUBBISH!

And that, in **TARGET**'s opinion, is, exactly, what one gets at ROKA Restaurant, Hongkong, the stand-alone eatery, located at Pacific Place, Hongkong Island, whose website alleges:

ROKA serves contemporary Japanese robata-yaki cuisine in a casual and informal setting at Pacific Place, an established address in Hong Kong for shoppers and three renowned hotel properties ... ROKA incorporates the charcoal robata grill in the restaurant, bar and robata counter to create an energetic atmosphere.'

TARGET () visited this restaurant on Sunday, August 21, 2011, at 7:40 p.m. and, at first, was very impressed by the décor.

That was the only thing that impressed this medium about ROKA, however.

The following is that which was ordered on the evening of this medium's visit:

Meat

300 Days Grain Fed Australian Black Angus

Sirloin 12 ounces

Sauce: Shiso Bearnaise

\$HK330

*Kochijian Fuumi No Kohitsuji 10 ounces
Lamb Cutlets with Hot Pepper Spices*

\$HK275

USDA Certified Prime Angus

Tenderloin 12 ounces

\$HK395

Vegetables

*Asupara
Asparagus with Sweet Soy and Sesame*

\$HK65

*Yaki No Satsumaimo
Grilled Sweet Potato*

\$HK65

*Sanshu No Yaki Maitake
Maitake Mushrooms with Garlic Soy and Ponze*

\$HK65

This restaurant appears to sell only bottled water from New Zealand and the cost is \$HK75 per bottle. It is called, 'Antipodes'.

Having been seated for about 3 minutes, following the placing of the order for dinner for 3 people, along came the vegetable dishes – without the meat dishes!

This is suggestive of a fast-food, franchised restaurant outlet and, by the looks of the vegetables in their dishes, the vegetables, all being dried out, which happens when food is precooked and, then, reheated just before being served, one could not help but speculate as to what kind of Management had been engaged to oversee the operations of this 140-seater, food outlet.

The Assistant Manager on the evening of **TARGET**'s visit was Mr Bryan Van Den Berg, a native of South Africa, he said, which made this reviewer think that, possibly, he was a descendant of the original Die Afrikaner Bond, a political organisation, established in The Cape, [South Africa](#), in 1879, aimed at encouraging Afrikaner nationalism and uniting South Africa under Afrikaner rule, although this was later modified to white rule.

Anyway, Mr Bryan Van Den Berg was an affable young man, but he appeared to be quite ignorant of the food that ROKA was serving although he did his best to make **TARGET** think that he knew his onions.

The Food

On reading the menu, which stated that the Australian Black Angus was 300 days, this medium misunderstood and thought that the meat had been hung for 300 days.

It turned out that the poor animal had been slaughtered after 300 days of life, having been fed grain, during its short lifetime.

This is utter RUBBISH, of course, because, being a mammal, the calf would have been nourished by its mother's milk, initially, being quite unable to eat grain at such an early age.

Since it had been slaughtered, allegedly, after 300 days, then, the meat should have been described as being veal – and nothing else.

When the meat was presented at the table, it had been sliced through in about 6 millimetre strips and it was dry, almost bone dry, in fact.

The outer layer of the meat was of a greyish colour, the centre was reddish, and, from the core, came a little water – no blood!

What, probably, had taken place was that the meat had come out of the freezer/cold refrigerator and had been half-cooked and, then, recooked when ordered by some unsuspecting patron.

As a result, the meat had been dried out: No juice, at all.

And the price of this dish was \$HK330.

The next course was the lamb cutlets – which could not have been lamb but mutton due to the amount of fat that was present, and the very strong taste of the meat.

Lamb can only be, at most, 6 months' old, otherwise it is mutton.

Many people prefer mutton to lamb because of the stronger taste and the firmer texture of the meat of the more-mature animal.

The hot-pepper sauce did a fairly decent job of trying to mask the identity of the meat, but this reviewer had lived in New Zealand for a while and does know the difference between a young member of the gregarious, grazing ruminant animal of the phylum, Ovis Aries, and the older animal, sexually mature and able to breed.

Wanting to compare the Australian beef to the United States's version, **TARGET**, then, ordered the USDA Certified Prime Angus Tenderloin Steak.

A wait of about 30 minutes elapsed and the American steak still had not arrived.

After asking a passing waitress what was happening to the dead meat, it arrived at the table within a few minutes.

This reminded **TARGET** of a chunk of meat, which had been taken out of a freezer and slipped into a microwave oven and, then, finished off on a charcoal grill to give the appearance of it, having been grilled, only.

This was the first attempt by ROKA.

It was completely inedible, the greyish colour of the meat, being a telltale indication of a piece of beef that had been frozen and then, defrosted. and, then, placed on a hot grill and burned, almost paper dry.

Mr Bryan Van Den Berg denied that the meat had been frozen, but, on examination, he agreed to take it away and bring another steak as he tut-tutted on examination of the horrible-looking item on the plate that he carried away to the rubbish bin (presumably).

After a wait of another 30 minutes or so, another steak arrived: It was no better than the first one.

And this chunk of meat cost \$HK395!

On the way out of the restaurant, Mr Bryan Van Den Berg said to this reviewer:

‘The next time that you want to try our food, let me know and I shall give you a nice piece of meat.’

Which confirms that which **TARGET** had suspected, all along: The meat, served to this medium, had been RUBBISH – and this Afrikaner knew it, too.

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