

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

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

Name of Restaurant

Grissini, Grand Hyatt Hongkong

Address of Restaurant

No. 1, Harbour Road, Wanchia, Hongkong

Date of Visit

Monday, April 8, 2013

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

Choice	Extensive	Limited	Unbalanced
Cost	Reasonable	Unreasonable	Expensive
Storage of Wine	Good	Poor	Unknown
Expertise of Sommelier	Excellent	Acceptable	Not In Available

Total Cost of Meal

Very Expensive	Moderately Expensive	Very Reasonably Priced
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Name of Assistant Executive Manager -- Food and Beverages

Mr Herve Mazella

Name of Executive Chef

Mr Marcus Mathyseek

Comments

GRISSINI OF GRAND HYATT HONGKONG: THINGS HAVE CHANGED FOR THE BETTER

There have been radical improvements in both the quality of the cuisine, its preparation and presentation as well as the quality of service at Grissini, the Italian food outlet at The Grand Hyatt Hongkong.

Since the last visit of **TARGET** () to this restaurant, somebody has put the boot up somebody's arse and things, today, are very different from 'yesterday'.

This medium visited Grissini on Monday, April 8, at about 7:30 pm and, aside from the young hostess, standing near the lift, who had trouble in pronouncing the names of European guests – it took three corrections for her to be able to pronounce this reviewer's name, properly – the service was, for the most part, par excellence.

Getting to The Grand Hyatt Hongkong in the early evening on a weekday can be difficult and frustrating due to it, being the rush hour for homeward-going office workers. The access roads to the hotel at this time of the day can become heavily congested with motor vehicles of all sorts, very often.

TARGET took a ride on the MTR to the Wanchai Station – just one, three-minute stop from Admiralty Station – and, then, walked across the pedestrian bridge, spanning the Harcourt Road freeway, in the direction of Immigration Tower rather than fight the vehicular traffic that is, most of the time, bumper to bumper.

The Grand Hyatt Hongkong, in this medium's opinion, has, always, been one of the loveliest-looking hotels in the 416 square miles that constitutes the Hongkong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and so, on that Monday evening, it was a pleasure to note that Management of the hotel has continued to maintain the splendid décor of the entrance hall and the mezzanine floor, both of which are spick-and-span.

On arriving at the Second Floor of the hotel where Grissini is located, it appeared that, over the years, little had changed at this food outlet: It remains, by appearance, alone, the epitome of elegant dining.

Although, in the past, it has not always been such.

As the evening wore on, it became only too apparent that, aside from the outward appearance of this lovely restaurant, the service was complementary: It would have been difficult to improve on it.

And the service staff comprises only ethnic Chinese with little requirement for any European maître d'hôtel to be on hand.

Grissini can seat 100 diners and Victoria Harbour may be viewed from just about any table. Looking at the Harbour is really magical, no matter what season of the year it might be.

The chef de cuisine is Mr Andrea Fraire. He hails from Piedmont, Italy, **TARGET** was informed. He has been the chef of Grissini since 2011.

Eating At Grissini

Having studied the menu, this is that which was ordered for two people:

Tuscany Flavours

*Roasted Scampi with Green Pea Cream,
“San Gimignano” Saffron Sauce
Spring Vegetable Salad*

*Spinach and Ricotta Tortello “Maremmano” with Rabbit Ragout
Tuscan Pecorino Cheese Fondue*

*Herb Roasted Pigeon with Raisins and Pine Nuts
Mashed Potatoes, Spring Onion and Roasted Bell Pepper Puree*

*Stracciatella Zuccotto with Almond Cantucci, Vin Santo Sabayon
70% Amadei Dark Chocolate Sauce*

4 courses at \$HHK800

From the a la carte menu

*Blue Mana Crab Meat Salad with Mascarpone,
Pumpkin Herbs from Grand Hyatt Garden
\$HK250*

*Mancini Spaghetti with Garlic and Oil, Sea Urchin,
Toasted Almond and Broccoli Rabe
\$HK290*

*Baked Cod Fillet in Livornese Style with White Wine and Oregano
Green Asparagus and Roasted Potatoes
\$HK460*

*Homemade Gelati – Vanilla Bean (2 Scoops)
\$HK90*

From the first course to the last one, it was only too clear that the Grissini chef knows only too well what are the three ingredients of good food: Appearance; Smell; and, Taste.

Each dish that was ordered resembled a painting.

The first two courses were the Roasted Scampi with Green Pea Cream and the Blue Mana Crabmeat Salad with Mascarpone.

Which dish was better would have been impossible to select because they were both wonderful, with the scampi – also known to the Irish as the Dublin Bay Prawn – not being overcooked so that the meat of the crustacea had not become tough, while intricate care had been taken with the crabmeat salad so that the sweetness and flavour of the meat of the decapod had not been compromised by any additional herbs or spices, used in the creation of the three cubes, each measuring about half an inch square.

The second dish, the Spaghetti with Garlic and Sea Urchin, etc, turned out to be a huge problem dish because it was so spicy that **TARGET**'s reviewer found it impossible to eat more than one, flaming mouthful.

When the waiter was informed of the problem, the dish was hurriedly removed and promises were made, immediately, that the same dish would be freshly prepared – with the offensive cayenne pepper (or whatever had been used to make it spicy), being eliminated.

While awaiting the second attempt at the spaghetti dish, along came a dish of two scoops of a fruit sorbet with three halves of fresh strawberries ... ‘to clear away the attack of the spiciness,’ our waiter joked.

Surprise! Surprise!

When the second attempt at the spaghetti arrived, it was very well received although, in this medium's opinion, the blob of sea urchin is better placed atop a spoonful of vinegared Japanese rice, also known as Uni Sushi in Japan, instead of it, being mixed into a spaghetti dish.

However, that is a personal comment and it should not be construed as being a criticism of this dish.

The final dishes of the evening were supposed to have been the Baked Cod, Livornese Style, and the Herb-Roasted Pigeon.

However, somebody in the kitchen had made a massive faux pas and had prepared two helpings of baked cod.

When this was pointed out, all Hell broke loose.

Apologies all round and, while this reviewer paid a visit to the 'water closet', Management decided to present **TARGET** with a charger, on which a variety of Italian cheeses had been arranged in a circle in order to while away the time until the pigeon made its appearance at the table.

Within about 10 minutes, the pigeon made its appearance along with the baked cod.

Both dishes were delicious although this reviewer preferred the pigeon over the cod.

The cod was a relatively simple dish and, while it was, in its own right, delicious, the pigeon dish was a much-more delicate offering, comprising two slices of the breast of the roasted bird and a deep-fried leg, coated with what appeared to be breadcrumbs.

The cost of a dinner, comprising four courses from the table d'hôte menu is \$HK800 and, if one adds three glasses of wine with the courses, the cost rises to \$HK1,250.

It is a bargain, in this medium's opinion.

TARGET will be returning to Grissini in order to obtain the genuine flavours of Italy.

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