

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

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

Name of Restaurant

Il Milione

Address of RestaurantG16-21, Ground Floor, Hutchison House, Harcourt Road, Central,
Hongkong**Date of Visit**

Thursday, May 2, 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	Unknown

Total Cost of Meal

Very Expensive Moderately Expensive Very Reasonably Priced

Name of Restaurant Manager

Mr Emanuele Birpolo

Name of Executive Chef

Mr Marco Gubbiotti

Comments

The proverb that states that a bad workman always blames his tools, most likely, would be the excuse of the chef de cuisine of the newly opened restaurant in Central, Hongkong Island, might like to apply in explaining the reason that things are not going very well at 'Il Milione'.

But the place for any decent chef is in the kitchen, actually getting stuck into the business of creating new dishes or cooking traditional dishes and, if he is not cooking, then, at least, supervising his assistants in a hands-on approach of his culinary art.

It is not the place of Chef Marco Gubbiotti to prance round the restaurant in his spotlessly clean whites, acting as the maître d'hôtel (the master of the house).

(The spotlessly clean whites of a working chef has to be the telltale mark of a man who does not like to dirty his hands in a working kitchen.)

The matter of the mediocre quality of the cuisine are among the many criticisms that this medium could write in a tome because Il Milione, really, has quite number of problems that it has to solve if it wants to be competitive, in the opinion of **TARGET** ().

The serving staff needs to be taught how to serve and the sommelier should be instructed to change glasses when serving a second bottle of Champagne.

But the matter of the cuisine is among the biggest problems of this relatively newly opened Italian eatery, located at Number 10, Harcourt Road, Central.

This medium visited Il Milione on Thursday, May 2, 2013, at about eight o'clock and, after a short discussion with the Manager, Mr Marco Gubbiotti presented himself and, on learning that a party of six people would like to sample his food, he rushed away in order to decide what to serve his new customers.

He did not think too hard, however, because he, already, had a Tasting Menu that he had been suggesting to other guests who, also, wanted to experience this Italian-styled restaurant.

This was that which this restaurant was serving on **TARGET**'s visit:

Degustazione – Tasting

Capesante rosolate

Bandiera di peperoni arrosto, latte di cocco, maggiorana

Seared scallops, roasted pepper, coconut, fresh marjoram

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Maccheroni alla chitarra Verrigni

Gamberi rossi siciliani crudi e cotti, pomodorini confit

Verrigni chitarra spaghetti, raw and cooked Sicilian red prawns, cherry tomato confit

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Branzino del mediterraneo

Zucchini: arrostita, escapece, purea

Mediterranean seared sea bass, zucchini: roasted, deep-fried escapece, pureed

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Biscotto semiliquido al cioccolato Venezuelano 72%

Crema al pepe di Sichuan, sorbetto di lamponi, aceto balsamico

Molten Venezuela 72% chocolate with Sichuan custard cream

raspberry sorbet, balsamic vinegar

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Piccolo cose dolci

Small Pastries

All of the above could only be described as being terrible with the lone exception of the sea bass course.

The first course was one seared scallop. It was not too bad, but it, certainly, was not good.

It tasted as though there was something terribly wrong with the lone bivalve mollusk: Perhaps, it was lonely?

The second course was described as being an Oyster Soup.

It was terrible! It could not have been worse.

It was not on the Tasting Menu – and it should not be on any menu ... ever!

This reviewer has been to Italy on a number of occasions and neither of the first two courses was like anything that one could imagine in the country where Constantine The Great embraced Christianity.

(Constantine was the first Roman Emperor to profess Christianity. He, also, provided the impulse for a distinctively Christian culture that prepared the way for the growth of Byzantine and Western medieval culture.)

No self-respecting Italian chef would have had the chutzpah to make claim to the two courses as being of Italian origin.

Needless to say, not one of the assembled guests was impressed by the food that had been served at this point of the dinner.

The second course from the Tasting Menu was even worse than the first one because, among other things, the pasta had been severely undercooked so that, as one tasted it, it was not a case of al dente (a firm texture), but the acknowledgment that one was eating, very raw pasta, smothered in a ketchup-tasting sauce.

No complaint could be levelled with regard to the sea-bass course: The fish was fresh and it had been cooked correctly.

But it, most likely, had been prepared by a Chinese cook – because Chef Marco Gubbiotti was much too busy, talking with guests.

As for the final course of the evening, it appears that many Hongkong restaurants are, these days, serving variations on the same theme.

Once again, few of **TARGET**'s guests cared to finish this course, too.

The above menu was labelled as '*degustazione*', meaning '*tasting*'. Well, if that is the best that Il Milione can do, then, this restaurant will not last long in the competitive environment of eateries in these 416 square miles.

The cost of the food alone for six people was \$HK5,520.

Costly?

Outrageously so!

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