

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

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

Name of Restaurant

Pierre

Address of Restaurant25/Floor, Mandarin Oriental Hongkong, No. 5, Connaught Road, Central,
Hongkong**Date of Visit**

Wednesday, July 17, 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
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Name of Director of Food and Beverage

Mr Nicolas Dubort

Name of Executive Chef

Mr Uwe Opocensky

Comments

The food reviewers of **TARGET** () may be a little old-fashioned, enjoying, as they do, the taste of the flesh of a piece of chicken that has been cooked to perfection, or swallowing down a chunk of a blue lobster, whose delicate meat, literally, melts in one's mouth.

But, when the best natural ingredients are drowned in rich sauces, be they unique or run-of-the-mill type, then, the sauces, can, if the cook is not sufficiently careful, overtake the flavours of the dish that they were intended to complement.

This is **TARGET**'s opinion of the food, served at Pierre, the fine-dining restaurant at the top of Mandarin Oriental Hongkong.

This medium visited Pierre on Wednesday, July 17, 2013, at about 7.15 p.m., after an absence of some years.

The restaurant has changed since this medium's last visit and, certainly, it is cosy while, still, maintaining a rather formal setting.

The ambiance is as excellent as is the service.

The food, however, leaves a lot to be desired.

The following is that which **TARGET** ordered for its two reviewers:

SUMMER TASTING MENU by Pierre Gagnaire 2013

*Crab meat, baby squids and cucumber coated with button mushroom jelly
Stuffed brioche with spider crab and grapefruit
Sardine infusion, olive oil sherbet*

*Poached line-caught seabass lightly salted with fresh herbs
Eggplant and coarsely chopped tomato; emulsified green bell pepper juice*

*Borlotti coco beans timbale thickened with velvety foie gras/green curry soup;
Pan-sautéed girolles mushroom with fresh almond*

*Blue lobster aiguillettes almost raw
summer cabbage with parmesan/pistachio powder/frozen raspberry*

*Roasted rump of veal flavoured with oregano; sweet onion purée with smoked lard
Tiny artichoke poivrade, argurula and celery sticks
Minted garden peas ice-cream*

*Roasted goat cheese with rhubarb, elder flower jam/aged white balsamico vinegar
Fourme d'Ambert, stuffed Bergeron apricot with ricotta
Ossau-Iraty and aged Cantal, celeriac cream; Izarra granite*

DINNER MENU by Pierre Gagnaire 2013

*Blue lobster <<aiguillettes>>/piquillos sauce/rhubarb and enoki mushroom
Stuffed lettuce with black forbidden rice/Dodo bisque
Lobster claw/brown shrimp mayonnaise/cumbawa and coriander salad*

*Pan-fried john dory in a truffled butter/slowed-simmered onion with black truffle
Warm corolla of scallops/spelt with truffle sauce
Olive oil sherbet with black truffle*

Commenting on the **SUMMER TASTING MENU**, first.

The First Course: The crab meat and baby squids had no discernable flavour at all.

The only thing that one could taste was that of the sauce in which they had been soaked.

The Second Course: The seabass, as with the First Course's crab meat, had been drowned in sauces and, as a result, one could taste the sauces, very well – but not the delicate flavours of the seabass.

One could pop a chunk of the seabass in one's mouth and, if one's eyes were closed and there was nobody to state from where did the chunk of flesh originate, one would have had no idea of that which one was eating.

The Third Course: Was it a soup or was it meant to be a gravy?

The Fourth Course: The blue lobster, as with the first two courses, had been smothered in a sauce that was not identifiable with any particular culinary genre.

The sauce, however, did a wonderful job of camouflaging the sweet flavours of the blue lobster.

The Fifth Course: Good-quality veal, normally, can often be a poor cousin to well-aged steak, but it has its own positive attributes that make it the choice of many diners for a variety of reasons.

The veal that was served at Pierre on **TARGET**'s visit could have been mistaken for the frozen variety – because it was tasteless. But this medium is willing to accept that this fine-dining establishment would not stoop to serving frozen meat – not at the prices, being demanded.

The Sixth and Seven Courses: There is little reason to comment on these dishes – because they were, in a word: Nothing.

The Dinner Menu

The First Course: The blue lobster bore the hallmarks of the same marine crustacean, served up in the Fourth Course of the **SUMMER TASTING MENU**: It was almost tasteless due to the fact that the lobster meat had been almost completely obliterated by the sauce in which it had been infused.

The Second Course: As for the John Dory, it was a pitiful sight, lying on a very nice-looking dish, covered with something, labelled as a truffle sauce ... or was it?

Again, the sauce and admixture of this and that, resulted in one not knowing, exactly, what one was eating.

The Ambiance

Pierre is a lovely restaurant, being elegant, as already stated, and having a lovely view of Victoria Harbour.

The service could not be improved and the staff goes out of their way to accommodate diners' requirements – and then some.

TARGET was told that the ratio of serving staff to the 35 patrons is about 2.50:One – which is very high.

However, when one can leave this restaurant, thinking along the lines, '*What in the blazes did I eat?*' then, something is wrong.

What is wrong with Pierre, in this medium's opinion, is that it has gone right over the top.

It has relied on artificial gimmicks, such as rich sauces as well as composite flavours, derived from various herbs and spices and an admixture of raw produce so as to emasculate the flavours of the prime ingredients, claiming that '*This is the way that this restaurant likes to serve up the dishes.*'.

The total cost of **TARGET**'s meal for two people was \$HK4,100.

TARGET cannot help but end this review with a quote from Proverbs 16-19:

*'The highway of the upright is to depart from evil:
He that keeps his way preserves his soul.
Pride goes before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.
'Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly,
than to divide the spoil with the proud.'*

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