

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

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

Name of Restaurant

Zuma Hongkong

Address of RestaurantLevels 5 and 6, The Landmark Atrium, No. 15, Queen's Road Central,
Hongkong**Date of Visit**

Saturday, March 15, 2014

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	None

Total Cost of Meal

Very Expensive	Moderately Expensive	Reasonably Priced
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Comments

Zuma Hongkong could never be considered a traditional Japanese restaurant although it has a number of the traditional dishes that one would expect to find in a high-class, Japanese eatery, catering for the discriminating Asian gourmet who does not like to stray too far from the nest.

Unlike the traditional Japanese restaurants, found in the Hongkong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People's Republic of China (PRC), where food costs a bomb for very little to eat, with waitresses, dressed in kimonos and talking very delicately as they smile, sweetly, Zuma Hongkong is 'loud' and boisterous, marked by or expressive of exuberance and high spirits.

The waiters and waitress have, absolutely, no connection, directly or indirectly, with the land of the samurai and, in fact, on **TARGET**'s visit to Zuma Hongkong, there was no suggestion of any of the serving staff, having had any association with anything that was Japanese let alone, having visited the country.

The Eastern European hostess, who showed **TARGET** to the table on which this medium's three-man team sat for the best part of two hours, was, probably, a fashion model – she was, certainly, sufficiently thin to pass for one, standing about six feet tall in her stocking feet – and the waitresses, rushing hither and thither, giggling as they went, were all from the Philippines, Myanmar (you know, the country that used to be named as Burma), Indonesia, Turkey and a number of other parts of Asia, other, that is, than Japan.

The chefs, **TARGET** () was told, hailed from various parts of the world, Europe and the Antipodes, mainly, but there was a couple of Japanese men, taking care of the sushi counter.

This medium visited Zuma Hongkong on Saturday, March 15, at 7.00 p.m., and the first thing that was very noticeable was the din from the diners, some of whom were, obviously, tipsy if not on the verge of feeling under the weather.

Due to the lack of much in the way of soft furnishings, sound travels throughout the entire dining area of Zuma Hongkong, bouncing off the granite walls and attacking one's eardrums, rather violently.

But it is all in good fun, for the most part.

It was noted that most people, trying to gorge themselves, were extremely well dressed, relative to other HKSAR restaurants where patrons do not take the trouble to dress appropriately, with young ladies, seemingly competing with each other, showing off in their best attires.

The Food

Having studied the menu, the following is that which was ordered:

Zaru Tofu
Chilled homemade tofu served with condiments

Soft Shell Crab

Nigiri Sushi
2 pieces
2

Anago Sushi
Sea Eel

Tamago Sushi
Egg

Uni Sushi
Sea Urchin

Arjun's Toro Temaki Sushi
Fatty Tuna and Finely Diced Spring Onions

Crispy Salmon Skin Roll Sushi
Salmon, salmon skin, shiso, spring onions and ikura

Honetsuki ko-hitsuji no hatchou miso fuumi
Hacco miso marinated lamb chops, pickled onions and myoga

Yakitori-Negima Yaki
Chicken skewers with baby leek

Kisetsu no yasai tempura
Seasonal vegetable tempura

Almond Tofu
Fresh almond tofu, Japanese Morella cherries and crispy organic milk ice cream
morello

Banana Cake
Green tea banana cake with coconut ice cream and peanut toffee sauce

Chawan Mushi
Vanilla steam custard with Japanese Clementine, pomelo and rice cracker

With the meal, a bottle of Billecart-Salmon Rosé was ordered at the cost of \$HK1,050. Billecart-Salmon is a medium-sized, Champagne house, located in Mareuil-sur-Ay, France.

The total cost of the above was \$HK3,325 plus 10 percent service charge.

One cannot criticise the food at Zuma Hongkong because, by and large, it is very good.

The quality of the ingredients is first-class and the presentation of just about all of the dishes was second to none: Some of the dishes reminded one of delicately crafted paintings.

Many had a number of the hallmarks of traditional Japanese cuisine, but the appearances were about as far as it went with any dish, originating from the once, proud and honourable Japanese Empire.

Due to the fact that, really, Zuma Hongkong makes no pretensions of trying to pass off as the real McCoy, service goes along with the dishes – and this was very noticeable on **TARGET**'s visit.

From time to time, one is shocked out of one's skull as a waiter or waitress drops a metal tray, full of dirty dishes, onto the stone floor, the noise of the mishap, cascading round the room in the manner of a thunder storm.

The restaurant was packed to overflowing on this medium's visit and, due to the fact that the tables are arranged very closely together – obviously to increase patronage – it was understandable that, from time to time, the serving staff, in trying to squeeze past one table to another, accidents are bound to take place.

One hilarious incident was when the bottle of Billecart-Salmon Rosé Champagne did, eventually, arrive, about 15 minutes after it had been ordered, the obese waiter, serving **TARGET**'s table, asked:

'Do you want to use these glasses – pointing to the ordinary water glasses on the table – or would you prefer the

long, thin glasses (usually referred to as flutes)?'

One could not be cross with such a question because this poor man was working his fingers to the proverbial bone; and, after all, he was trying his best to perform his assigned tasks as well as he was able.

The restaurant can seat between 160 and 180 guests at one sitting and, due to the fact that Zuma Hongkong suffers from what appears to be an insufficient number of serving staff – and, quite obviously, very few trained serving staff – one has to have some empathy for their plight.

For most of the evening, during this medium's visit, this reviewer had to pour his own wine!

Conclusion

Zuma Hongkong is a beautiful restaurant, of that there can be no argument, but due to its success over the years, Management has determined to sacrifice service in order to increase revenue ... as quickly as possible.

It is unlikely that pairs of lovers would consider visiting this restaurant more than once because it is difficult for one's voice to be carried across the table over the constant noises, made by diners at other tables as well as with the clanging of dishes, caused by the untrained serving staff.

When romantic intimations to one's prospective lover are the order of the day, Zuma Hongkong is not the place to try to utter them.

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