

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

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

**Name of Restaurant**

Tosca

**Address of Restaurant**102/Floor, International Commerce Centre, No. 1, Austin Road West,  
Kowloon, Hongkong**Date of Visit**

Friday, January 23, 2015

**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	Reasonably Priced
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### Comments

When one hears the words, ‘ritz’, or ‘ritzy’, more often than not, one associates the words with glamour, luxury and, perhaps, when one is in a bad mood, the word, ostentatiousness, is used to describe ritz or ritzy.

Perhaps, that is the reason that The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company L.L.C. was chosen for the name of this luxury hotel group, back in 1983.

The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company L.L.C. is, today, a subsidiary of Marriott International Incorporated.

The Ritz-Carlton Hongkong is located atop International Commerce Centre in West Kowloon, but it is not easy to locate in the ‘rabbit warren’ of the shopping mall even after one arrives at the commercial podium.

This is due to the fact of the very poor signage, with arrows pointing in all directions.

The Ritz-Carlton Hongkong occupies 16 floors – from the 102<sup>nd</sup> Floor to the 118<sup>th</sup> Floor – and makes the claim of being ‘*the world’s highest hotel*’.

The hotel’s fine-dining restaurant is named ‘Tosca’ and it is located on the 102<sup>nd</sup> Floor. The only access to this restaurant is to take the lift to the 103<sup>rd</sup> Floor and, then, descend one floor.

**TARGET** () visited Tosca on Friday, January 23, 2015, following something of a hike that lasted for a good 10 minutes after alighting from a Mass Transit Railway (MTR) train.

On arrival at the main door of the hotel, following instructions as to how to find the hotel’s entrance, those instructions, having been given by three, kind employees of International Commerce Centre, and on asking the young female attendant at the main door as to which floor was the fine-dining restaurant, this reviewer was told that there is no such restaurant, named ‘*Fine Dining*’.

Without stopping to discuss the matter further with this young lady, **TARGET**’s three-man team walked through the door and, there, a young man in hotel uniform came over to offer his services.

When asked for the name of the fine-dining restaurant, the young man politely enquired whether or not **TARGET** had made a reservation and for how many people.

‘Can you please tell me the name of the fine-dining restaurant?’ **TARGET** asked the young man in a voice that, clearly, was suggestive of exasperation.

The young man’s answer came back with another question:

‘Are you talking ‘bout the Chinese restaurant?’

At this point, this reviewer was nearing the end of his tether and this was becoming only too clear to this young man who, on realising that he had made another mistake of some sort or another, recited all of the names of all of the food outlets in the hotel.

He was stopped when he mispronounced the name: Tosca.

On being told to take the lift to the 103<sup>rd</sup> Floor and then walk down one floor, **TARGET**’s team made its way to a bank of lifts and, minutes later, arrived at the Italian, fine-dining restaurant of the hotel.

Having asked to meet the Italian chef, **TARGET** requested of this gentleman, who sported a very unusual hairstyle, what would

the restaurant recommend for a five-course meal for three people.

This was the menu that was produced:

*Zucchini and Artichoke Parmigiana, Anchovies with Ricotta Cheese*

*Handmade Fusilli, Chicken and Tomato Sauce with Provolone Cheese*

*Turbot Steak in Squid Ink Milanese*  
*Sautéed Seafood and Lemon Emulsion*

*Dry Aged Beef Tenderloin, Charchoal (sic), Foie Gras, Potato Gratin*

*Textures of Chocolate by Tosca with Passion Fruit*

*\$HK1,580 per person*

While the food was being prepared, the following wines were selected:

Louis Roederer, Brut Rosé, Vintage 2008, at \$HK1,650  
Chateau Talbot, Vintage 2005, at \$HK2,380

About Tosca's wine list, for the most part, it is comprehensive and reasonably priced. It is unlikely that it could not satisfy even the most discriminating diner who knows his wines.

As for the food, chosen by the chef, all in all, it was something of a disaster, in this reviewer's opinion.

The First Course was, very much, a vegetarian appetiser that had extremely bland flavours of the zucchini and artichoke, one, not being distinguishable from the other.

It was the kind of dish that the British are prone to prepare: Boiling vegetables to death.

The Second Course was, simple put, a pasta dish that reminded this reviewer of a tin of Heinz Spaghetti, with the real difference, being that Tosca's pasta was al dente whereas a tin of Heinz Spaghetti is, always, overcooked.

As for the Third Course, it was completely insipid and if one closed one's eyes, it would have been impossible to know exactly what one was eating.

The Fourth Course was a chunk of about two ounces of what was described as Spanish beef. The meat was dry and powdery and, as with the Third Course, it was insipid.

The Fifth Course could only be described as either being sickly sweet or, perhaps, just sickly. Whatever, it was impossible to eat.

The total cost of the meal was \$HK9,773.50.

It was a total waste of money.

The only saving grace for the meal was the good wines that **TARGET** had selected and had imbibed.

Tosca is a very pretty restaurant and one is able to enjoy remarkable views of Hongkong Island.

That was one of the best parts of the meal of Friday, January 23, 2015.

On a jocular note, for those inquisitive souls who are determined to try to prove that this medium is incorrect with regard to this appraisal of the food at Tosca, be warned! You will be told, among other things, that black vinegar is served at the table.

If one has never tasted 'black vinegar', be not afraid because the waiters appear never to have been taught to pronounce 'balsamic vinegar'.

Also, many of the serving staff do not know the difference between an avocado and an artichoke so that, when the First Course came, **TARGET** was informed that the artichoke was, in fact, an avocado.

Which proved to be completely wrong and a black-jacketed gentleman came over to apologise for the mistake.

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