

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

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

Name of Restaurant

Pierre

Address of Restaurant

Mandarin Oriental, No. 5, Connaught Road, Central, Hongkong

Date of Visit

Thursday, March 17, 2016

CategoryTARGETs RatingService

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 -- None	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor
General	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor

Food

Presentation	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor
Taste	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor
Quantity	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor

**Wine -- Unknown**

Choice	Extensive	Limited	Unbalanced
Cost	Reasonable	Unreasonable	Expensive
Storage of Wine	Good	Poor	Poor
Expertise of Sommelier	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor

**Total Cost of Meal**

Very Expensive	Moderately Expensive	Reasonable
----------------	----------------------	------------

**Comments**

Over the past five years or so, the one consistent factor with regard to Pierre, the fine-dining restaurant of Mandarin Oriental, Hongkong, is that the food has, always, been, at best, mediocre – at worst, absolute rubbish.

On Wednesday, March 17, 2016, **TARGET** () returned to Pierre in order to learn whether or not things had changed.

They have not!

One is still served rubbish, dressed up in French-language names.

This medium cannot understand the reason that many well-heeled, Chinese patronise this pretentious food outlet unless it is due to the fact that it is a quiet place to hold an impromptu business talk or, in the case of tai-tais, to swap the scandal stories of the day, such as who is sleeping with whom.

This medium can confirm that there was a European cook present at Pierre, at least during the hours of 12:30 pm and 2:30 pm – because he was wandering round the restaurant the entire time.

Which raises the question: Who was doing the cooking in the kitchen?

On the afternoon of **TARGET**'s visit, this is that which was ordered for three people:

***First Course***

*Pâté en Croûte << 4 meats >>, Mustard Ice Cream, Walnuts Pickles*

*Marinated Mackerel and Grilled Octopus,  
Brown Shrimps Jelly, Shizo Paste and Butter Milk-Lime Granita*

*Foie Gras Soup with Amontillado, Gambas/Grapefruit*

***Second Course***

*Scallops with Zézette Broth, Paris Mushroom/Mange-Tout*

*Leg of Lamb with Fenugrec, Slow Steam Piquillos/Chorizo/Spinach/Blond Raisins/Eggplant, Parsnip Paste*

*Grilled Heart of Rib-Eye, Roquefort Sauce, Sweet Potatoes Croquette*

***Third Course***

*Rhubarb Tart, Yogurt Ice Cream*

**The Food**

**The First Courses**

The Pâté en croûte was tasteless (and wrongly spelt on the menu, too.)

The only thing that had any taste in this dish, at all, was the fat.

The waiter was asked as to what were the meats that went into this dish. He answered that he did not know.

So much for the expertise of the serving staff.

As for the marinated mackerel, etc, it was, in fact, just a light salad, containing bits of this and that.

As with the pâté, it, too, had no discernible flavour.

As for the foie gras soup, it may have been tasty, at one time, during its preparation, but the lukewarm liquid that was poured over the blob of something, lying at the bottom of a soup bowl, tasted, if anything, of *'dishwater'*.

Unbelievably, all of the first courses had one thing in common: They were, in a word, dreadful.

### **The Second Courses**

It took about 30 minutes for the Second Courses to arrive after the dishes of the First Courses had been taken away – and that was only after **TARGET** had enquired as to the reason for the extremely slow service.

After all, this was supposed to be the advertised *'Express Lunch'*.

Of the three Second Courses, the best was the scallops.

The scallops had been sautéed and could not be criticised.

But, as for the few slices of the leg of lamb, extraordinarily, the meat was completely insipid.

This reviewer pondered whether or not the lamb had been boiled.

When the waiter was asked about the lamb, he said, proudly, that the meat was from France and that it was *'from a baby lamb'*.

(**TARGET** has, always, been left to believe that the meat of a lamb must not be more than six months old. Thus, what in the world is a French *'baby lamb'*?)

As for the other, terribly overcooked green things that accompanied the paper-thin, six thumb slices of lamb, hidden underneath the vegetables, this reviewer had no idea as to what they were (or had been) because, just like the meat, they had no discernible flavour.

Turning to the rib-eye steak course, the meat, too, was completely insipid.

**TARGET** had requested the steak to be well done.

It came rare!

When the waiter was asked as to the reason that the steak had no flavour and that it was rare instead of well done, he said that the meat was from Australia – and *'that is the taste of this meat'*.

He did not answer the question as to the reason that the meat had been cooked rare.

### **The Service**

As with the food, the service was very poor.

As an example of the poor service, when this medium asked for a cup of coffee and a cup of lemon tea, while the dirty dishes were being taken away, it took the best part of 15 minutes for the tea and coffee to arrive.

And it only arrived after this reviewer had threatened to cancel the order and *'just bring us the bill.'*

Further, when the coffee and tea did arrive, they were, both, lukewarm!

For the two-course *'Express Lunch'*, the bill was \$HK498 per person.

In this medium's opinion, at \$HK498 per person, it is a rip-off.

Senior Management of Mandarin Oriental will be happy to hear that **TARGET** will not be returning to Pierre.

It is said that there is no such thing as a single complaint from a restaurant's guest because that guest will pass on his experience to many of his friends; and, it is a certainty that that guest will never permit any of his/her family to eat at an establishment, such as Pierre.

***While TARGET makes every attempt to ensure accuracy of all data published, TARGET cannot be held responsible for any errors and/or omissions.***

*If readers feel that they would like to voice their opinions about that which they have read in **TARGET**, please feel free to e-mail your views to [editor@targetnewspapers.com](mailto:editor@targetnewspapers.com). **TARGET** does not guarantee to publish readers' views, but reserves the right so to do subject to the laws of libel.*