

TARGET

Intelligence Report

VOLUME XXIII No. 76

S A T U R D A Y

April 10, 2021

Viewsletter

Dining and Wining

Dining and Wining

THE BEST

RESTAURANTS OF HONGKONG ...

AND THE WORST !

<u>Name of Restaurant</u>	Lobster Bar and Grill
<u>Address of Restaurant</u>	6 th Floor, Island Shangri-La, Hongkong, Pacific Place, No. 88, Queensway, Hongkong
<u>Date of Visit</u>	Tuesday, March 2, 2021

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Suite 2901, 29th Floor, Bank of America Tower, Number 12, Harcourt Road, Central, Hongkong.
Telephone Number: 2573-0379 Facsimile Number: 2838-1597 E-Mail Address: editor@targetnewspapers.com
TARGET Website Address: www.targetnewspapers.com

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Dining and Wining

Category

TARGET's 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

Total Cost of Meal

Very Expensive Moderately Expensive Very Reasonably Priced

Comments

Prior to the onslaught of COVID-19, that pandemic that caught the Government of the **Hongkong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR)** of the **People's Republic of China (PRC)** very much off guard, Lobster Bar and Grill had been a place where guests of Island Shangri-La, Hongkong, especially the European contingent as well as well-heeled Asian businessmen, made good use of this food outlet, in the vernacular of North Americans, as their '*Watering Hole*'.

The ambience of Lobster Bar and Grill had, always, been a cosy place to quench one's thirst for alcoholic beverages and, for gentlemen, on the lookout for the company of ladies of the night, the pickings had, often, been reasonably good.

But, as a food outlet, specialising in serving a style of European cuisine, prepared by a Chinese cook, more often than not of little consequence, it has, usually, paled to insignificance.

One of the many reasons that the European cuisine at this food outlet had never, really, been up to scratch, in days of yore, was due to the fact that Management of Island Shangri-La, Hongkong, appeared never to have considered this food outlet as being of great important – other than as a ‘*Watering Hole*’ and a ‘*pick-up joint*.’

In the past, **TARGET** (泰達財經) had frequented it, but some years ago, when copious quantities of sand were discovered in a dish of steamed clams, it was just too much!

When this matter was brought to the attention of the then female manageress of the day, all that one was told, after receiving a questionable stare – that lasted for about one minute – was, one word: ‘*Sorry!*’

TARGET had not returned to Lobster Bar and Grill since the steamed clams incident, as a paying guest, that is, except on a very few occasions when it was necessary to make our presence known as a simple gesture of politeness to the host who had invited this medium to break bread with him.

The Past Is The Past

Recently, there has been a changing of the guard, façon de parler, and a European chef has been installed as being in charge of the outlet’s kitchen.

For much of the past decade or so, usually, a Chinese cook from one of the other food outlets of the hotel had been seconded to be in charge of the kitchen of Lobster Bar and Grill for various short stunts.

The changes at this food outlet, today, are very noticeable.

But not all the dishes are of the top drawer – sadly.

That is not to suggest that Lobster Bar and Grill is anywhere near the best restaurant of the three, five-star hotels in the immediate vicinity of Pacific Place, where Island Shangri-La, Hongkong, is located, but the fare at this food outlet, certainly, is a step up from yesteryear, to be sure.

On Tuesday, March 2, 2021, **TARGET**’s trio of three reviewers, having made an advance booking under a nom de plume, entered Lobster Bar and Grill at precisely one o’clock in the afternoon.

Dining and Wining

On scanning the 'Signature Set Lunch' as well as some of the dishes, taken from the a la carte menu, the following is that which was ordered:

From The Signature Set Lunch

Appetisers

Bone Marrow

*Roasted bone marrow, salad of parsley, shallot, caper berries,
Preserved lemon, toasted brioche*

Charcuterie

A selection of cured meats, grilled toast, mustard, cornichons

Main Courses

Puff pastry base, Dijon béchamel sauce, black pudding, escargots, shallot, rocket salad

Pesto Pasta

Rigatoni with pesto alla Genovese, basil, pine nuts, aged parmesan

Desserts

Crème Brûlée

Rich custard base, caramelized sugar

Paris-Brest

Choux pastry, hazelnut cream

From The A La Carte Menu

Appetiser

Lobster bisque

*Lobster broth, poached lobster
\$HK218*

Main Course

*300gram USDA Black Angus boneless ribeye steak
\$HK488*

Dessert

Beignets

*Maple-glazed, calamansi curd, lime leaf
Lemongrass custard, coriander sugar
\$HK88*

Without going into a detailed opinion of the above-mentioned dishes, the French have a lovely adverbial phrase to describe them: Comme ci comme ça – which, just about, says it all.

It would be fair to state that, by and large, the desserts topped all the dishes by a wide margin, with the lone exception, being the Crème Brûlée – which was a vain attempt at that which should have been an exciting end to a meal.

(Whoever tried to emulate this lovely French dessert was either ignorant or stupid ... or both.)

The total cost of the above-mentioned meal for three people was \$HK1,950.00.

With the Signature Set Lunch at the fixed price of \$HK488, per person, it is reasonably priced and, at this price, no doubt, it would certainly lure a number of business people to sample the food – if for no other reason than the price.

However, one should not expect too much from this food outlet because the price should say it, all.

The atmosphere of Lobster Bar and Grill is very acceptable. It is just about unchanged from first time that this medium entered it, more than three decades, ago.

As for the service, it is excellent – and that is the highest accolade that this medium could award any aspect of this restaurant.