

Restaurant Review

The Biter Bit, One Way or the Other

The problem with recession at the Bar is that it provides time for lunching. There are deals at some very good restaurants (Chez Oz for one) but mostly prices remain high.

Meares QC reminisces of the early 30s "Whoever had the Official Receiver's brief for the day bought the gin, the rest bought the tonic, and we ate pies". We must be nearly there!

If you are recession-proof, a visit to Peter Damien's new *Papillon* is well worth while. It is in the old *Balthazar* York Street location: spacious and elegant.

The service is attentive, even brisk: your coat is hung up and a drink is in your hand before the unpunctual are even in King Street.

I had a Caesar Salad, correctly warm with fine morsels of ham, anchovy, raw egg, three lettuces, croutons, garlic, oil and lightly vinegared. It was the special entrée of the day and I loved it.

Next, veal kidneys with beetroot sauce. A pre-cooked small beetroot was finely chopped with onion and garlic and lightly fried to sweat point. White wine and stock were added and the lot reduced to a concentrated sauce. The kidneys were cut small, sautéed very fast separately and the sauce was added and the whole finished with cream. Fantastic.

One beer, one glass of Dawson's Chardonnay and a glass of house Shiraz made it all very relaxed and easy. Fifty dollars a head plus tip got us out.

My brother Jim chose a much more ideologically sound venue for lunch last week when his trial was not reached for the second time. *Casa Juanita* (423 Pitt Street) is Spanish for the Spanish. They understand "in a hurry", they understand fresh good quality ingredients, but the key to it is garlic with everything and fresh chilli with almost everything.

I had garlic champignons, nice button mushrooms in a ramekin, blazing hot, barely cooked and bursting with garlic and chilli. The others all had garlic prawns which were the same only prawns (Oslington style).

Next I had garlic quail. Two tender quail, beautifully cooked with garlic and chilli.

A huge plate of vegetables and rice and bread galore. The others had garlic chicken which was ...

The paella was off but people say it is good.

Very tasty, very authentic, very cheap. \$18 including booze!! If you don't like it hot, speak up! □ John Coombs

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The Registrar
The New South Wales Bar Association
DX 1204 SYDNEY

Dear Sir,

RE: LIQUOR BAR ACCOUNTS OUTSTANDING

Things are tough, times are hard.
Here's my cheque to pay the bar.
It weren't the booze that stopped me payin',
It were the fees for which I'm prayin'.

Solicitors owe me lots of loot,
The Council doesn't give a hoot.
If I could be as tough with them,
You wouldn't have your right - in rem?

Nine dollars eighty don't seem a lot,
A person's copybook to blot.
The bar must be in dire straits,
And so its plight I must abate.

I note you've cut off all my credit,
I couldn't believe it when I read it.
Now that I have squared my bill,
Oh please restore me at the till.

□ Philip Gerber

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