

Rendezvous Rocks - September 2008

When the chance arose to attend the launch of the new Rocks menu at Rendezvous, it seemed an offer too good to miss. On hearing however, that we would be cooking our own meals on a piece of volcanic stone which soars to a skinsearing 460 degrees, we had second thoughts…

It's fair to say I'm no Nigella, in fact my idea of preparing fine cuisine starts and ends with boiled egg and soldiers so it's little wonder the thought of playing chef was a worry. Luckily all was explained “don't touch the rock, keep the slices chunky for slow cooking, thin for well done” and voila!

The Rocks concept is an extension of the existing Rendezvous menu (which boasts a range of British and European a la carte favourites) and aims to unite the customers in a unique dining experience. It follows the trend already popular the likes of Sapporo in Liverpool which presents a theatrical slant on dining out, offering an experience to remember as opposed to just an average plate of food.

The “rocks” are a real conversation starter and our entire table shared their expectations and tips on how to best make use of the rocks and the most effective way to balance the meat and vegetables on the sizzling squares. Even the fact that it was the peak of British summertime, and our entire table were a baby step away from being liquidised with sweat, didn't overshadow the evening.

As promised on the menu Rendezvous offers ultimately healthy choices as due to the intensity of the heat, no oil is required, meaning you can spend your calories on dessert! The range of meat is extensive boasting “safe” options in the form of Fillet/Rib eye steak, for the less adventurous (me) and more extravagant alternatives such as King prawns and Ostrich steak for those that like a something a little riskier (Laura).

I have to say, as a self-confessed meat-a-phobe even the Ostrich looked appetising and once the prawns had lost the blue tinge and were turning a pale shade of pink they looked pretty special. There are also vegetarian alternatives such as Mediterranean vegetable and halloumi kebabs and fish choices which means that the herbivores in your group are not excluded. The heat of the rock meant that the meat remains succulent without getting that dried out or tough to chew.

The plate itself was an explosion of vibrant colours with a pink portion of meat and a collection of fresh skewered summer vegetables and the tastiest doorstep chips known to man. The food tastes barbecued but without the hassle of attempting to ignite the coals in our laughable summertime drizzle. The owner and our evenings host Peter relished the role as he sauntered effortlessly between guests topping up glasses while telling anecdotes of the previous trials of the rocks.

The dessert was a dream come true combining the same blend of healthy food with the naughty, indulgent twist. We were each given a steaming tin foil package which contained the mystery treat and on unwrapping the parcel were greeted with an incredible aroma and a lively blend of the most delicious “5-a-day” ever! The fresh summer fruit salad reduced in white wine and drizzled with a helping of cream provided the perfect ending to the superb feast.

In terms of decor the restaurant exudes chilled out class thanks to the lavender tones and contemporary furnishings. The meticulous approach to detail is reflected in everything from the serving plates to the table service to ensure that the highest level of quality is consistently achieved. Rendezvous reputation is built on a foundation of providing exceptional

quality at affordable prices.

For a special occasion it ticks every box and provides a relaxed yet fun environment to chat with friends or celebrate birthdays with family. With special offers available throughout September and an upstairs dining room reserved for private functions for up to 16 people you have no excuse not to let Rendezvous rock you!