

Taste

The best of Sussex food and drink



Tasty - beer has its chips

Page 28



PubSpy: It's fine but lacks soul

Page 29

Tourists or locals – it's good to share at Harbour Hotel

THERE'S a new menu at The Jetty at the Brighton Harbour Hotel. Hayley Pearce speaks to Lucy Brookes, deputy general manager, about what makes this seafront restaurant more than a hotel bar and why it's just as much a place for locals to dine

LARGER cuts of steak and mezze dishes can only mean one thing — sharing is encouraged at this seafront venue.

A new menu has been rolled out at The Jetty restaurant, on the ground floor of the Brighton Harbour Hotel, and plates designed to be split feature heavily.

The emphasis is still on seafood and meat but there are now more diverse and interesting options for vegetarian diners, such as the new season asparagus and forest mushroom salad.

Newcomers to the line-up include a mixed fish grill main with bream, brill, mussels and prawns, the smoke house steak tartare starter and light bites such as truffle arancini and iberico ham croquettes.

The beautifully presented fruits de mer is also a fresh addition.

Some of the restaurant's trusty staples remain, namely the decadent cheese soufflé and tasty but uncomplicated cod and crab main course.

Lucy Brookes, deputy general manager at the hotel in King's Road, near the bottom of West Street, said: "As people are moving away from fine dining, we wanted to create a simple, affordable menu.

"Owing to trends in the food world, we wanted to have more shareable dishes.

"This is a restaurant where you can come for afternoon tea or fish and chips, but equally you can enjoy a special slap-up dinner."

The Jetty is keen to earn its place among the city's gastronomic greats and be a destination for foodies.

"There are a lot of exciting things happening in terms of food and drink in Brighton, and we want to be a part of that," said Lucy.

Desserts are unique to the Brighton branch of the hotel, giving head chef Rafal Krepa free rein to come up with his own concoctions.



Fruits de mer and inset, the mussels. Below Lucy Brookes

The amaretto sable, served with cherry ice cream, and the summery, floral elderflower pannacotta with gin and tonic granita are two of the more inspired inventions.

Restaurant manager Greta Gaskaite and her team may well be the ideal ambassadors for the city as they are keen to impart their knowledge of the area and their friendliness knows no bounds.

"When we recruit, we look for people who are enthusiastic about Brighton, because we want our hospitality to represent the city," said Lucy.

"We are keen to be seen as more than just a hotel bar."

They want everyone to feel at home, whether they live here or are just passing through.

The Jetty's location, a stone's throw from the beach, coupled with its relaxed, no-fuss atmosphere, make it the ideal spot for visitors and residents alike.

"We always like to make sure we appeal to locals, as especially in summer you can start



to feel like a bit of an outsider in this city when it gets so busy," said Lucy.

The restaurant hosts weekly live music events to give people something to come back

for. Every Wednesday is Jazz Club, which features two slots at 5.30pm and 8.30pm.

Resident band No Little Trouble every other week, playing jazz versions of pop songs.

Friday features a live band or singer and later a DJ set.

The hotel is planning events such as a wine dinner with The Chapel Down Winery in Tenterden and a gin tasting evening with Brighton Gin Club, where British gins will go head to head with gins from the USA.

On the subject of gin, the HarBar special cocktails, are unique to the Brighton hotel and the ever-fashionable mother's ruin shows up in the floral gin bouquet, which tastes like Parma Violet sweets, and made in Brighton, made with Brighton gin.

The improved grasshopper, their own frapped, milkshake-like twist on the classic tippie, is one of three dessert cocktails, along with the espresso martini and lemon drop.

If none of the classics or the bar's own cocktails suit, the passionate bar staff, headed by bar manager Charles Taylor and head bartender Freddie Gander, are only too keen to rustle up something bespoke.

"The bartenders love to experiment and are desperate to add new cocktails to the menu.

"We aim to keep rotating them based on the season," said Lucy.

On weeknights between 5pm and 7pm, four cocktails cost just £20.

For those who are into hops, they have a pale ale on tap as well as Brewdog beers.

They will soon be adding a new champagne, created especially for the hotel and called Sparklehorse to the bubbly menu.

The hotel's underground spa, HarSpa, is an added bonus, and its lower level occupies part of a smuggler's tunnel, complete with authentic brickwork. It houses a gym, swimming pool, hydrotherapy pool, hot tubs, chill-out areas, a sauna and a steam room.

A range of treatments, from hot stone massages to oil scrubs, are also on offer.

"Our spa has just over 100 members, and during the week in the daytime it's relatively quiet for them," said Lucy.

The hotel will also be adding even more summery dishes to the menu by the end of this month, likely to be light and fresh salads.

Lucy said: "We intend to change the menu often so that when regulars come back they can try something new."



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