

Azzy Asghar asks... So, What's Cooking?



CHAI WU

Fifth Floor - Harrods
T: 020 3819 8888
www.chaiwu.co.uk

Although I am very aware that the world's most famous corner shop is also home to the seminal *Studio Frantzén* - I truly believe that *Chai Wu* has a claim to be potentially the best restaurant at Harrods! High praise indeed I know, but - pardon the pun - the *Proof is in the Pudding*, and also in the *Starters* and especially the *Main Courses*. Combine this with exceptional service and you have the makings of a masterpiece restaurant.

This exquisite fine-dining Chinese restaurant offers creative dishes which are masterfully prepared and served by knowledgeable and attentive staff that seem happy to extol the virtues of each dish and even others you may not have ordered.

Our dim-sum was incredibly succulent and the tempura soft shell crab was crispy yet delicate and bursting with flavour. The Beijing Duck served with fresh pancakes and mantou buns followed by duck fired rice - is, of course, a signature dish and one not to miss!

The marketing team at Harrods should truly spend much more of their time promoting the store as a leading London 'foodie destination' as there are truly numerous fabulous restaurants there - sadly, I only ever think about eating at any of them when I am actually shopping at Harrods - *more fool me!*

IL PAMPERO

The Hari Hotel
T: 020 3189 4850
www.ilpampero.com

Nestled on the corner within the discrete five-star boutique hotel The Hari sits Il Pampero, a modern restaurant which offers authentic Italian cuisine with a touch of pizzazz. Traditional Italian hospitality meets Belgravia sophistication not only in the vibe of the restaurant but also in the cuisine. Classic Italian dishes are elevated with the finest ingredients and served to a discerning clientele that know the difference between a *Zampone* and a *Zamboni*. The restaurant, much like the hotel, is elegantly dressed. Crisp white linen adorn the tables along with sparkling china and glasses and fresh-cut flowers.

The smiling and eager staff are reflective of modern London and represent all corners of Europe. They are both knowledgeable and willing and make the evening more pleasant. Pre-dinner cocktails of Cosmopolitans and Negronis are skilfully prepared and set the stage for the fabulous food to follow.

I have to force myself to stop devouring the warm fresh breads served with olive oil and balsamic. This is more difficult than it sounds as sometimes this simple pairing with a glass of Italian wine is as good as life gets!



I begin with succulent scallops which are lightly seared and bursting with flavour. My pasta dish of linguine with lobster is truly decadent and spoiling but what the hell I deserve it! Opting for Rack of Lamb to finish is the perfect choice. Slightly fatty and full of flavour and served with the world's creamiest mash and crispy fried zucchini fitters.

After actually dining at Il Pampero my initial ideas on the restaurant changed. What I had initially thought of as a 'fancy' Italian restaurant in Belgravia is in fact an Italian restaurant in Belgravia that I quite fancy! *Perfecto!*

MOSIMANN'S DINING CLUB - CELEBRATING 35 YEARS!

11b West Halkin Street, Belgravia, SW1
T: 020 7235 9625 www.mosimann.com

From 4th July until 19th August, *Mosimann's Club* will be opening its doors and welcoming residents of Knightsbridge, Belgravia, and Mayfair to experience the Club's exquisite food and service, a privilege normally reserved only for members. In celebration of their *35th Year Anniversary* this year and in honour of this milestone and to thank the local community for their support, residents and local businesses will be available to reserve a table for lunch or dinner. Helmed by legendary chef *Anton Mosimann* and his two sons *Philipp* and *Mark*, *Mosimann's Club* is one of the most prestigious private dining clubs in the world. Members come from the world over to enjoy its exemplary cuisine, wines and bespoke service, set in the luxurious and intimate atmosphere of a stunningly-converted 19th century church in the heart of Belgravia, with its relaxed Balcony Bar, grand Main Dining Room, and seven exquisite Private Dining Rooms.

In order to make a booking during the dates above, please call or email quoting *Mosimann's 35*. Private dining rooms are also available. Rooms range in size, accommodating from 2 - 50 people.

Mark and Philipp Mosimann: "*We are thrilled to be celebrating 35 years of Mosimann's in Belgravia this year and wanted to showcase our fabulous dining spaces and bar with the residents and business community of Knightsbridge, Belgravia Chelsea and Mayfair, we look forward to welcoming you to our beautiful dining Club.*"



I have literally never seen a review of the restaurant named *Dinner* by *Heston Blumenthal* without the obligatory picture of the iconic 'Meat Fruit'. And, being the conformist that I am, I have elected to toe the line - *et voilà!*

This dish, of course, is not just iconic but is emblematic in one 'fowl' swoop of all that is glorious about the venerated chef who holds three Michelin Stars at *both* his iconic restaurants! The dish not only demonstrates his creativity of thinking outside the 'crate', but is also beautifully prepared and delivers the quintessential *Blumenthal* signature of surprise and flavour - a trick borrowed from recipes of old apparently.

The 'Meat Fruit' turns out to be the most succulent and creamy chicken liver pate you will ever try - the orange zest adds a citrusy flavour and it is truly sensational.

His mastery extends, of course, to all his dishes. This restaurant is about exploring Britain's culinary heritage where a steak is not just a steak and a piece of fish is not just a piece of fish. Each has a story and is prepared in a way to maximise its natural flavour - perhaps even to enhance it.

Case in point the 'Catsup' - not a tomato in sight. Here they offer a cucumber version originally featured in an 1826 cookbook.



DINNER by Heston Blumenthal

Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park, London
T: 020 7235 2000
www.dinnerbyheston.co.uk

The food history voyage is further evidenced by the three cards the Head Waiter places on your table at the beginning of your culinary journey. The three card choices allow the guest to either be; a) left alone to enjoy their meal, b) the option for the waiter to describe each dish in some detail or c) the waiter to give you the history of the dish, its preparation and more - we opted for a combination of b and c for different courses. It was truly fascinating!

But despite the all the theatrics, at the core of the restaurant - as it should be - is fabulous food, food that you appreciate has a history and is cooked by skilled chefs but still delivers in terms of taste and flavour and exceeds your expectations - and so it does.

In addition to an open-plan kitchen, the elegant dining room showcases a beautiful glass-fronted wine cellar that has a selection any die-hard oenophile would die for.

The service is, as one would expect - exemplary, the setting in a beautiful room at the Mandarin Oriental overlooking Hyde Park - stunning, and the food remains the centrepiece that makes the evening one you will always remember and show-off to - I mean tell - your friends about!

MOSIMANN'S CLUB

11b West Halkin Street, Belgravia SW1

T: 020 7235 9625

www.mosimann.com



very A **EXCLUSIVE DINNER PARTY AT MOSIMANN'S**

There are few venues in London as beautiful and as exclusive as the world-famous, private member's club *Mosimann's*. Located within a beautiful old church in the heart of Belgravia, fine-dining doesn't get more spoiling than this! *Mosimann's* has been a family run business for over 30 years and a holder of the *Royal Warrant* by Appointment to *HRH The Prince of Wales* since 2000.

What is even more spoiling than eating at *Mosimann's* is eating in one of their private dining rooms. This was a treat the *KNIGHTSBRIDGE* team enjoyed recently when we invited ten close friends for an intimate dinner in their beautiful *Lalique Room*.

Frankly, there's a lot of stress in hosting a dinner party - Will all the guests show up? Will they all appreciate the food? Will it feel truly special and intimate? Well, when the invite asks the guests to join you for dinner at *Mosimann's* you can be sure they will *all* show up, the food was exquisite and the service exemplary. *Mosimann's* staff took care of every minutiae.

Even prior to our visiting the events team had been on the phone and email sending menu options (boy was it hard to select just one of each course!) they even suggested pairing wines.

On arrival we began with some delicious cocktails in the bar. Once all the guests had arrived we were taken to our private room - the *Lalique* - where chilled Champagne was waiting!

Coincidentally, the *Lalique* head office were also hosting an event at *Mosimann's* that evening but obviously *KNIGHTSBRIDGE* magazine is *so* important that we were given priority over their eponymous room (or maybe it was because they had many more guests than the intimate room of 12 can seat!).

Anyway, we relished the *smoked salmon with Dorset crab*, devoured the *seared fillet of British beef with peppercorn sauce* and salivated over the world-famous *Anton's bread and butter pudding!*

Our dinner was an occasion that will live long in the memories of both myself and all my guests. We ate epicurean cuisine, were offered genuinely friendly yet unobtrusive service and laughed the night away. The perfect dinner party in a perfect setting! ☺



LE COMPTOIR ROBUCHON

The Comptoir Robuchon is the tuber-cool brasserie and deli located on Piccadilly. It celebrates the exceptional French cuisine of Joël Robuchon with an energetic and refined dining atmosphere. Led by experts who worked with the late *Chef Joël Robuchon* for decades, the restaurant pays homage to his legacy by embodying his values of consistency, simplicity, and meticulousness. The restaurant features a 20-seat marble counter, an art deco dining room, and an impressive wine list. Diners can choose to sit at the counter for an interactive experience with the chefs or at individual tables for a more intimate setting. A 3-course lunch menu is available for £45 while the *Chef's Signature Menu* priced at a very reasonable £159 for 5-courses offers guests an epicurean journey into the world of Robuchon. The Deli, of course, has innumerable treats to take away including; chutneys, oils, wines, breads, cheeses, fish and meats.

www.robuchonlondon.co.uk



PRADA CAFFÈ - Harrods

Prada has opened the Prada Caffè at Harrods. The space revisits Prada's visual hallmarks, from the decor and menu to the tableware and atmosphere. Inside, the walls, ceilings and velvet-upholstered sofas and armchairs are delicately coloured with the brand's iconic green. The floors reproduce the black-and-white chequered floor of the historic Prada boutique on Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II in Milan.

The tableware is original and exclusive as is the blown-glass crystal glassware, including the Triangle series with its quintessentially Prada triangular pattern.

The range of food and drink covers the entire day, from breakfast to evening cocktails, and provides a subtle, modern take on Italian tradition, with sandwiches and risotto sitting alongside buffalo mozzarella and salmon and crab dishes and spritz. The Italian wine features bottles from Sicily to Piedmont. Pastries play a central role, displayed both on the spectacular central counter and the wall behind.

www.prada.com



THE DORCHESTER, ARTISTS' BAR

Rolls Royce's founder had a famous quote - "Take the best that exists and make it better" - that is certainly what The Dorchester has done with their Promenade. The new Artists' Bar is a glamorous and sparkling area for fun evenings of champagne, seafood and entertainment. The interior shines at every angle from the bar's own *Lalique* crystal designs and *Liberace's* legendary mirrored piano, which has been meticulously restored to take pride of place. Cocktails, served table-side on bespoke trolleys to create a touch of theatre, reflect the carefully curated collection of artwork that adorns the walls.

www.dorchestercollection.com