



The Lemon Tree Bistro

Good Food as It Should Be (And That's Official!)

I first reviewed The Lemon Tree when Paul & Kim Eynon took it over 4 years ago.

As with most new ventures, there was an amount of uncertainty as to whether it would succeed and which direction to take.

Well I'm pleased to say that the Lemon Tree has done much more than just survive the past 4 years - it has exceeded all expectations and has recently taken pride of place in the 'Good Food Guide 2010', making them one of only two restaurants in Plymouth to obtain the award!

It's not hard to see why they have succeeded though, with Paul's skill in the kitchen and Kim's effortless charm front of house, they really are a dynamic team.

I've been a paying customer on many occasions during the day as The Lemon Tree is a popular and welcoming continental cafe, perfect for lunching with friends or having a business meeting, but it's on a Thursday, Friday and Saturday night that this place really comes alive.

It's as though the place takes on a whole new persona and transforms into a vibrant bistro! With the Moroccan style table cloths, twinkling night lights casting a soft glow on each table and soft music playing in the background, you'd be forgiven for thinking you were on holiday abroad.

So, it was on a very sunny Saturday night that myself and a friend took ourselves along for what we hoped would be a pleasant, leisurely dinner a deux (no children, husbands or anything else to put us off our girlie catch up!).

We were welcomed by Kim and shown to our table. It was as though she read our minds as she suggested a glass of Rosè - it seemed to fit the mood perfectly and we were soon sipping our chilled wine whilst looking through the menu.

Now, I don't know about anyone else, but my girlfriends and I often look at the dessert menu first. That way we know whether we need to be saving room. However, normal rules did not apply here and skipping a

course was not an option (we couldn't possibly comment on something we hadn't eaten!) That said, we looked anyway and my friend spotted that Crème Brulee, her all time favourite dessert was on the menu so her choice was easy - I hoped it was going to be good as she is a real crème brulee critic!

We finally decided on the potted smoked mackerel and the mozzarella, tomato and basil bruschetta to start followed by the beef bourguignon and pan fried breast of chicken with wild mushroom sauce for our main courses.

Food ordered, we sat back and chatted over our glasses of Rose. Vibrant pink in colour, the wine had an amazing floral aroma and was crisp and fresh - that coupled with the fact that someone else was cooking my dinner made my life complete!

Our starters arrived- the potted smoked mackerel was served on a slate platter with horseradish cream fraiche and toast (Kim certainly gets a workout whilst serving, the slate was quite a weight!), my bruschetta was served simply on a white plate, with a drizzle of balsamic reduction.

With the sun going down outside, the tea lights glowing and the fresh taste of basil from my bruschetta, my mind was transported to those long leisurely dinners you have at a taverna on holiday after a long day on the beach.

Despite the bistro being quite busy, Kim was no less attentive - she effortlessly flitted between tables and it was obvious by the happy faces all around us that everyone had everything they needed.

Our main courses then arrived - an array of dishes, beef bourguignon, pan fried chicken, dauphinoise potatoes, carrots julienne and grated pan fried courgette.

The beef was so tender and the red wine sauce was deliciously rich - Lucky for me my partner in crime was up for sharing so I had a sneaky taster of the chicken - equally as delicious! We tucked into the veggies and dauphinoise potatoes, all the perfect size for two to share without wasting too much.

Knowing that we still had dessert to go, I took it easy on the potatoes and had a good rest before dessert arrived. True to her word, my friend went for the crème brulee and I went for the sticky toffee pud.

They say the proof of the pudding is in the eating (and apparently the topping of a crème brulee) and I'm pleased to say it passed with flying colours - Paul the Chef told us that he's tried many different variations of toppings to achieve that all important crunch and nothing works as well as good old brown sugar, well whatever his secret Sandy the Crème brulee Critic gave it her thumbs up and polished off the lot.

The Lemon Tree is currently an undiscovered gem for some but one that won't stay secret for too much longer - I would imagine that earning their award from The Good Food Guide could just be the start of something big for this small but perfectly formed bistro!



Reviewed by Lindsay Brown, Editor Signpost YNN Edition

*The Lemon Tree Bistro, 2 Hays Road South, Elburton - *Christmas bookings now being taken**
Open Tues - Sat 11am-2pm and Thurs, Fri, Sat Nights 7-11pm (Bookings only). T: 01752 481117 www.lemontreecafe.co.uk