



Abu Dhabi Week

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



Bank on this

AFTER A bad day at work and experiencing a serious craving for comfort food, a friend and I took an unprompted trip to the Shangri-La. After wandering around the many walkways of the souk and perusing almost every restaurant menu, we spied that mashed potato was served at Left Bank. Previously aware of Left Bank just as a bar, I was intrigued and pleasantly surprised by the selection of food.

The restaurant interior is immaculate and has some great design features. Sunken red leather-clad booths make for great parties, and chandeliers cascade from the ceiling. The moody lighting really sets off the retro-style decor, with a blue neon glow radiating from the

long bar area towards the back. Beyond the full-length glass, and looking out on to the magnificent mosque, a balcony wraps around the restaurant area, with tables set for alfresco dining.

Being a weeknight the restaurant was far from busy, and we chose our seats at one of the booths. A smiling waitress appeared within seconds and we spent quite some time making our food choices – we were spoiled for choice. I opted for the baked salmon with mashed potato; not wanting to miss out on some good old-fashioned comfort food, my dining companion chose the fish and chips, which proved slightly classier than in your average chippy (the Left Bank version boasts cod fillets with Tiger beer batter).

It seemed like just moments later that our dishes were brought out, and the attentive staff checked and checked again to see if we had everything we needed. First impressions of the food were mixed; it was presented well but was a tad too nouvelle cuisine for two very hungry foodies. The fish and chips, although notably in the 'smaller' menu section, should have been called fish and 'chip'.

home' treat, my friend was disappointed by the arty stack of tiny morsels that sat amidst a mass of white crockery.

I, on the other hand, had done quite well with my potato option, as the charred salmon fillet sat on a mountain of warm mustard mash. The accompanying asparagus was a touch on the oily side, but the creamy mushroom sauce was delicious – I could have done with just a dribble more. In hindsight the fish and chip portion was actually quite adequate for my lady friend, and the quality of the food overshadowed the quantity 10 times over. Unable to resist the dessert menu, we shared a strawberry mascarpone stack and a strawberry crème brûlée. Both were absolutely delicious and provided the perfect end to our meal.

Abu Dhabi is in serious need of high-end glossy establishments to draw in the great and the good. Left Bank fits this bill perfectly. It has a great vibe to it, and is relaxed and unpretentious with a well turned out but mixed crowd. I can definitely see myself returning with a party of friends to enjoy a full evening of dining and gossip. ■

Which? Left Bank

Where? Shangri-La Souk

How much? AED220 excluding drinks

Why? Impeccable service, great venue

Why not? Mean portion sizes

Rated: ●●●●●●●●●●

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