

Ideal meeting place with varied menu



The stylish interior at The Huxley, Edinburgh. Picture by Nigel Duncan Media

The Huxley, 1 Rutland Street, Edinburgh EH1 2AE (tel: +44 (0)131 229 3402)

This city centre outlet is located in Edinburgh's West End and describes itself as a perfect place to relax, refuel and gather with friends.

It certainly has everything going for it. It is an ideal meeting place for businessmen and women or for catching-up with friends.

It is also a perfect place to spend time watching the world go by as it sits at one end of Edinburgh's most famous street, Princes Street.

And it is a really comfortable place to read the papers and enjoy a coffee or a meal.

The Huxley is also convenient for people waiting to travel onwards as it is adjacent to the public transport network and taxis and within walking distance of the city's two main stations.

The big windows allow bags of light to enter the stylish restaurant area and the service was efficient.

The breakfast menu has enough choice to satisfy most people even hungry rugby players. The Huxley are "proud sponsors" of Edinburgh Rugby.

The menu boasts a full-Scottish. It also features eggs

benedict or florentine or royale and even smashed avocado and poached eggs on sourdough toast (add ons at a cost are smoked salmon or bacon) or just eggs on toast.

Furthermore, there is also a varied selection of food for those keen to eat healthy and some of the items come with a calories count.

The choice includes crunchy granola with natural yoghurt and seasonal fruit compote, homemade pancakes with streaky bacon or seasonal fruit compote and maple syrup, super oats (porridge oats soaked in milk with fresh fruits and topped with super seeds) and porridge with seasonal fruit compote or honey.

The Huxley also offer mango and chia pudding (mango, coconut, chia and dragon fruit, 212 calories).

So, let's get to the crunch. The coffee arrived piping hot. Mine came in a stylish pink cup and saucer, but I can live with that.

What I can't cope with or understand is overcooked food. Let's deal with the positive first.

My McAllister's Loch Fyne kipper had bags of flavour. The fish came with a slice of lemon, something I think is unnecessary for kippers. Some would argue that point.

It also arrived with an extra pat of butter, once again I felt this was unnecessary. The free-range egg was perfectly poached and there were two pieces of granary toast.

Now the negative. It was evident from the second Pam's plate arrived that several items had been overcooked.

The smoked Ayrshire back bacon was dry and, in parts, difficult to cut. The mushroom (it advertised mushrooms, by the way), normally a favourite, was left on the plate as it showed signs of distress.

The sausages (two different flavours, pork and herb and Hardiesmill beef) were tasty but also on the overdone side and the potato scone had a fatty sheen and lacked any real flavour.

The free-range fried egg was OK as was the haggis. The black pudding was edging to overcooked but managed to sneak into the plus category. There was also a tomato.

To verify Pam's opinion I also tasted parts of her meal. Sad really. Only 24-hours previously I was at a breakfast function in a city college where students presented what I considered to be a superior product.

It was my first visit to The Huxley and I emerged disappointed that the full Scottish – the item at the top of the menu – failed to deliver.

Tourists numbered large among the customers when we visited and the tourism industry is vital to our national economy.

So is our reputation and we are in tough economic times when value is key.

Therefore, getting it right is so important and this full Scottish breakfast should have left a lasting impression. Positive not negative.