

The divine Le Di-Vin

Despite being an on the large side venue, Le Di-Vin is almost a charming secret. The entrance is tucked beside the 'Tudor house' on Randolph Place, and funnily enough, when you mention that, just about everyone knows where it is.

I took along my good chum Susie who was eager for a sophisticated night out and as we're both mums we were even more delighted to know that this establishment doesn't admit children after six o'clock. Perfect! There's nothing worse than being lumbered with other people's brats when your own 'angels' are at home.

We had a date with the sommelier Luke, whose first question was, "Are either of you driving?" Very amusing, Luke, would we be so daft?

He gives us the thumbs up and starts our evening off with a Loire Valley NV Saumur Brut, a light but impressive fizz made in the Champers method. The food offering in Le Di-Vin is what I want from a wine bar.

Through the day you can get some light French classics like Croque Monsieur, Tartine and various fish dishes but the evening is mainly cheese and charcuterie, however if interesting dreams are what you're after, a table of four can order a Raclette.



The interior is impressive – and high!

The interior is impressive to say the least. Formerly the Oratory of St Ann, it features a majestic bar with a tempting selection of wines on display. The seating, divided between a grand street level floor and mezzanine, you can be open or cosy and indeed there are a few spots that could be utilised if you happen to be with someone you ought not to.

Luke furnishes us with a fantastic array of cheeses and cured meats and a South African Wolftrap White. We then go on a tour of German Pinot Noir, which happened to be from a bottle Luke found, 'through the back'. I really get the feeling Luke is someone I ought to befriend. He's the sort of sommelier who loves engaging with the clientele and delights in recommending something you might like that's just popped into his head.

You could call him a true eccentric, in the sense that he's probably got no idea. He tells me that one of his heroes is Keith Floyd and indeed he could be the love child of the late great chef, albeit far more sweet natured. And off we go again with various tasters of as one of my own heroes would put it, "The best wines known to humanity!"

Luke is a happy sommelier as he loves the new approach that treats clients as equals and has no lament for the old school 'talk down to the customers' tradition. If you know lots or sod all about wine then Le Di-Vin is a good place to frequent

or begin a tremendously fun education.

We finish off with a creme brulee and sticky toffee pud, accompanied by a Jurancon, Chateau Jolys. A perfect end to a fun evening. Susie catches her train by the skin of her teeth and I taxi home.

I fear there might be a slight hangover to be had on the school run in the morning but it was certainly worth it.

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