

REVIEW – Le Petit Beefbar arrives in Edinburgh

Le Petit Beefbar has opened its first residence in Scotland in the historic InterContinental Edinburgh The George.

Housed in the hotel's grand dining room, with a separate entrance from the main hotel, this is a restaurant that you will want to save for a special occasion. It is most definitely laid-back, yet luxurious, dining in a superb setting.

At the launch the invited ensemble were treated to a decadent dining experience, with faultless service. The dining room has had a makeover and is light and airy, with lots of detailed features on the panelled walls and with its beautiful ceiling and grand piano at the far end of the dining room, is architecture to behold.

The Beefbar is the concept of stylish although understated Italian Riccardo Giraudi, aka the Beefboy. His family traded beef into Europe, and the original Beefbar, opened in Monaco in 2005. Then it was like a traditional beef bar but fast forward 10 years, and working with amazing chefs all over the world, there are now 24 Beefbars in various guises. This is only the third Le Petit Beefbar but as Giraudi declares it "the most beautiful one".

The menu is divided into three parts: sexy street food inspired by the most popular recipes from around the world, designed for sharing, to great meat cuts sourced in Australia,

Japan and the United States, and iconic dishes, from sides to mains and desserts.

Executive Chef Matthew Parker has worked with Group Executive Chef Thierry Paludetto and Riccardo Giraudi on a menu that centres around locally sourced produce and carefully selected cuts of beef from the renowned John Gilmour and Campbells butchers, embodying Edinburgh's rich culinary heritage and diversity.

There was nothing petit about the menu we experienced, which showcased some of the best of Le Petit Beefbar's menu. As the George's General Manager, Michael Martin explained: "the evening is all about sharing the food, family-style, with fellow diners, (some complete strangers), food stories and the entertainment".

We were treated to a selection of canapés made up of their signature dishes. These were not necessarily all meat based, and the avocado hummus topped with pomegranate and served on a thin crisp bread was fresh and light. However the stars of the show amongst their sharing dishes were the Croque Sando, a 45-day cured beef sirloin filled prosciutto and mozzarella sandwich, served with Le Sauce Beefbar, made with butter, herbs and truffle. It was rich and moreish. The Kobe beef jamon, aged for 18 months in Spain, was wafer thin meat that melted in your mouth. I could have devoured a whole board of this alone. The Mini Big K, made from Black Angus beef, was the perfect size to taste the quality of the meat, but still leaving room for the main affair.

For main course, we shared, family-style, a Miso Black Beef which is an 8-month milk-fed Holstein, from Peter's Farm in Holland, a Black Angus Rib-Eye, (a 140-day corn-fed Black Angus, from Creek Stone, USA), their Signature Fillet (Grass-fed Aberdeen Angus, Scotland), a pepper-crusted fillet served with Paradise Pepper Sauce, a sweet, peppery curried sauce; and the real treat, Certified Kobe Beef (900-day grain-fed

Japanese Black, from Hyogo, Japan). All different in tastes and textures and I felt so privileged to experience such a range.

The beef dishes were accompanied with hand-cut fries, served with parmesan and summer truffle, sautéed mushrooms, and their classic signature mash, which was creamy and silky smooth and probably the best mash I have eaten – ever. I dread to think of the calorific value but I wasn't counting, as I was enjoying it too much.

Sharing again family-style, two desserts were on offer, a soft fior di latte gelato, served with either a caramel de leche or a dark chocolate sauce and tasty toppings including caramelised pistachios, which had the rather nostalgic taste of burnt Sugar Puffs, and Scottish berries.

The second dessert was their signature French toast, a caramelised brioche, soaked in a rich custard, and served with a salted caramel sauce and yoghurt ice-cream. It was a lot lighter than it looked and was something I doubt I would be able to recreate at home, so definitely worth ordering.

While their menu does also cater for vegetarians and pescatarians, I suspect those that will get the biggest pleasure from this restaurant will be meat-lovers. I'm already saving up for the day when I can come back, as I'm going to need deep-pockets but if my first foray into Le Petit Beefbar is anything to go by, it will be worth every penny.

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