

Saturday, January 26, 2013



Shropshire Star



January 23, 2010 06:00

The Old Orleton, Wellington

Star rating: * Lisa Bailey enjoys a selection of unusual courses at an old coaching inn with a modern touch**



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On a cold and wet bonfire night we were walking back to our car after watching the fireworks at Wellington Cricket Club. And there was The Old Orleton Inn looking extremely inviting.


The restaurant was heaving with everyone looking as though they were having a great time. It looked cosy and just our type of place with a contemporary interior.

So within a week, I had booked a table at the Old Orleton Inn, which is a restyled 17th century coaching inn facing the Wrekin hill in Holyhead Road. On the night we went it was freezing cold, so it seemed just the place to spend a good few hours.

The Old Orleton, Wellington

We were shown through to our table after selecting a few drinks and spending more than a good few minutes perusing the menu. But, the waiter was more than content to come back and did not rush us in any way. It was also the first time my husband Neil and myself had had to catch up in the mad run up to Christmas.

The Old Orleton uses fresh, quality produce which is sourced locally whenever possible, which is great to know. The menu was unusual and varied.

Although I'm not a vegetarian, a friend had told me the Old Orleton had an extremely good reputation for vegetarian food and the menu certainly boasted a varied choice, such as carrot, cashew nut and [cranberry](#)  puff pastry wellington served with apple braised red cabbage and a rich tomato and onion gravy (£13.95).


We both found the menu a little confusing at first with the light bites being the starters. I chose the home cured sugar and salt glazed duck breast and with pickled berries and rocket salad and Neil went for the Shropshire hog and smoked bacon meat loaf with creamed wholegrain mustard and pickled veg (£7.95). I thought the duck was priced a little steep at £8.95, but it was delicious. Both dishes came with gorgeous bread baked locally. Neil's starter was tasty and the combination of the mustard and pickled veg was just right.

For the main course, I decided on whole roasted sea bass with a toasted almond crust, dressed with roasted clementines and lemons drenched in crab butter (£15.95) and Neil went for pan roasted plump chicken breast stuffed with Welsh goats cheese and gooseberries served with a light lemon and mustard seed cream (£12.95).

The dishes were served with new season potatoes and seasonal vegetables, which were broccoli, carrots and cauliflower.

I'm a big fish lover and the sea bass was delightful - it flaked away from the bone and the almond crust complemented it. I half expected the roasted clementines and lemons to taste a little too tangy, but it

was wonderful. Again Neil's combination for his main course was delightful and the gooseberries and light lemon made it taste so fresh.

It would also be rude not to try the desserts. I was torn between the little pot rum and [raisin](#)  custard under burnt sugar and caramelised nuts or the chef's famous boozy bread and butter pudding with rum soaked apricots and vanilla pod custard. (Neil was persuaded to go for the rum and raisin custard while I went for the bread and butter pudding with the proviso I could try both. All desserts were £5.95.

But I think I had the best choice! The bread and butter pudding was lovely and moist. At first both Neil and myself thought it looked a little on the hard side, but appearances can be deceptive and it melted in your mouth - not that Neil had any chance to try it out. Well, I am the reviewer!

I was a little disappointed with Neil's rum and raisin custard. I didn't think there was much taste, but Neil seemed to enjoy it.

We decided to take our tea and coffee in the cosy bar area. The Old Orleton does seem to be a rabbit's warren and the large party on the next table took their coffees in a tiny alcove which I had a nose around.

After I had finished nosing around, which included discovering the bright red sinks in the ladies, we sat and relaxed in the bar area.

The Old Orleton, Wellington

We were quite content in a warm and cosy atmosphere, and eventually decided to book a taxi home at 10.45pm. It was then that we discovered that they were on strike! Panic stations - how do we get home?

The Old Orleton has ten fully refurbished boutique style bedrooms, but before we gave that option a go we tried the father-in-law option, who thankfully came to the rescue.

We had a thoroughly enjoyable evening at the Old Orleton and it ticked all the right boxes - contemporary, but cosy; attentive, but not fussy, and delicious food.

Let's hope that we don't have to wait until next Christmas before making a return visit.

MENU SAMPLE

Starters

Whole cider poached pear filled with blue cheese and forest berry cream (£5.95); spinach and chestnut mushroom coddled egg bake with watercress and creamed lemon dressing (£6.95)

Main courses

Butterfly cut loin of Much Wenlock pork with Bramley apple and cob nut crumble and cider and sage sauce (£12.95); roasted pumpkin, pear and cob nut tart glazed with English soft cheese with nutmeg

butter and wilted spinach (£13.95)

Desserts

Elderflower, forest berry and fresh fruit cocktail; apple and mincemeat fine butter [pastry](#)  drenched with vanilla pod custard

ATMOSPHERE

Friendly and inviting

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