

DINING with Mick Toal

Hotel fare with gourmet flair

KILLARA'S landmark Greengate Hotel is a great venue for all the family, no matter what the occasion.

Your outing can be planned or spontaneous, and as formal or relaxed as you like.

The grand old building is from another era, but the Greengate has indeed moved with the times and remains one of the North Shore's most popular pubs.

Naturally the Greengate has a few bars and function rooms upstairs, but the centrepiece of the hotel is the recently renovated ground floor Portico Restaurant and Bar with its outdoor terrace dining area and fabulously expansive main hall.

And the Portico offers far more than your basic pub grub – more like hotel fare with gourmet flair.

Sure, if you want a casual drink while watching the game on the big screen, then you can duck in to the Highway Bar, but if you want to indulge in a great value restaurant quality meal then the Portico's the place to go.

One of the pleasures of dining at the Portico are the professional and friendly staff... on the night Kathy and I met our friends Bruno and Linda for a meal we were very ably attended by Tristan, who has been studying finance but has a voluminous knowledge on wine with a great talent for matching it with your meal. Toting quietly behind the scenes in the kitchen is executive chef Reece Salker and his team.

Entrees can often be a conundrum. I can never go past the grilled scallops drizzled with a Japanese dressing and seaweed salad (\$18) but if dining in a

Portico Restaurant and Bar

Where: Cnr Pacific Highway and Greengate Rd, Killara

When: Lunch and dinner seven days from 11.30am, kitchen closes 9.30pm

How much?: Breads \$6, entrees \$17-\$38, pastas and pizzas \$18-\$25, mains \$23-\$35, sides \$6.50

Bookings: : 9498 3577, fax 9496 7201, web: www.greengatehotel.com.au

group you can't go wrong with a communal tasting plate (\$38), which offers salt and pepper calamari, tempura prawns, whiting fillets, oysters, grilled land, five spiced quail and dipping sauces.

Kathy ordered the fish of the day (swordfish, \$29), which was presented on a bed of buttered asparagus with bug meat ravioli and herb roasted chats with chive cream. Linda opted for the Tasmanian Salmon Fillet (\$28, pictured) and Bruno the Twice Cooked Duck Red Curry (\$31) with coconut rice and roti.

I settled for the 300g Rib Eye (\$31.50).

I was more than happy with a few *Bees Knees* boutique beers from the tap, but Tristan suggested a 2003 Coonawarra *Reschke Vitulus* and Lindemans Hunter Valley *Bin 0555 Semillion*, which, naturally, perfectly complemented the other offerings.

The Greengate also caters for the kids with their own great value menu and Nintendo games.



Fish of the Day (swordfish) on a bed of buttered asparagus.

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