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Beyond the hype at Oxwell & Co



Oxwell & Co

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Interior at Oxwell & Co

Club Street and Ann Siang Hill.. cluttered with eateries, bustling bars and too many similar concepts. One venue which puts itself out there as having everything you need under one roof is the recently opened Oxwell & Co.

Coming to the scene amidst much fanfare, owing to the establishment's input by Gordon Ramsay's ex-left hand man, Mark Sargeant, the menu attempts to bring high-end, authentic British gastro-pub food to Singapore. But does it live up to the hype? More on that soon.

Firstly, let me strip their four floor concept back for you. The ground floor is the main bar, the first floor is the restaurant, the second floor is a private dining room and then there's a roof terrace complete with garden area to get to work on some home grown garnishes and herbs. The whole building has been redesigned beautifully thanks to the artistic geniuses at The Stripe Collective.

For the harsh food critics out there, Oxwell & Co "isn't designed to be a culinary masterpiece, but a local place which makes true British food accessible using simple, quality products in dishes available at reasonable prices", says Mark Sargeant. Well, we're not sure the prices are as reasonable as they initially intended them to be, and we wouldn't say that the food is worth shedding tears of joy over, but then again it's not too shabby either.

With Mark Sargeant and Luke Whearty - ex-Tippling Club and now Oxwell drink concept hero - on board, Oxwell is aiming high. And so before I get onto the food, let's dwell on my favourite part at Oxwell & Co - the bar.

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Welsh Salt Marsh Lamb Rump

When I hear 'cocktails on tap' it makes me think of those God-awful cocktails in cans you get in places like 7-11. BUT, after sipping their concoctions I soon realised that 'cocktails on tap' actually means decent tasting, readily available cocktails which are in your hand quicker than you can say 'No ice please'. The on-tap tipples are a very affordable, delicious takes on classic drinks. A personal favourite is the **Sangria**, which is earthy, well spiced and very unique in flavour, but it usually gets sold out pretty early on - especially at weekends. They also do a **Gin & Tonic** and an incredible, smokey, vanilla, charcoal flavoured **Cubre Libre**, all at \$12. If you're a beer drinker, they also have specially house-brewed beer from Jungle beer.

After that it was time to pop down for a casual dinner in the beautifully designed restaurant with its upmarket, seaside-pub décor.

First up the bread basket. Not something I'd usually note, but this one came with perfectly crispy Yorkshire puddings. A bit of an odd placement, but a perfectly executed Yorkshire nonetheless.

For starters we had the **Heritage Tomatoes, Goats Cheese & Wild Herbs** (\$18), a fresh and flavoursome appetizer and the **Asparagus, Poached Egg, Hollandaise** (\$18), a solid match of flavours and a filling starter or lovely as a salad...if you can call it a salad.

From the mains we tucked into the tender **Welsh Salt Marsh Lamb Rump, Roast Onions, Green Sauce** \$35, a good portion for one person, served on top of a small handful of vegetables. The mint flavoured sauce is a delicious accompaniment.

We also tried the **Dover Sole, Seaweed Butter** (\$65). The seaweed doesn't add any flavour as such, but it's a complimentary texture against the buttery, soft fish. It looks slight, but if you makes sure you eat the meat on both sides of the bone there's actually a lot of meat on there. A pleasant dish, but without doubt overpriced at \$65.

The **Strawberry Eton Mess** (\$14) fed the big kid in me. Perfect meringue, fruity, creamy and lip-licking good. Not made for sharing for selfish reasons.

The **Cold Chocolate & Passion Fruit Fondant** (\$14) is served all glittery and symmetrical, best described as a party on a plate! With an oozing centre of peach goo to tone down the overwhelmingly chocolate taste, this is choco heaven.

Despite the hype, unfortunately I think the food takes a backseat to

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the interesting drinks concept. I would recommend Oxwell & Co more for the cocktails on tap than its culinary offerings, so if you're hoping to sample some then you better gallop out of the office, because Oxwell's limited downstairs seating and small bar areas means nabbing your spot early or else you face spilling out onto the streets with the other punters.

Written by Superpat

On this occasion, the meal and drinks were compliments of Oxwell & Co

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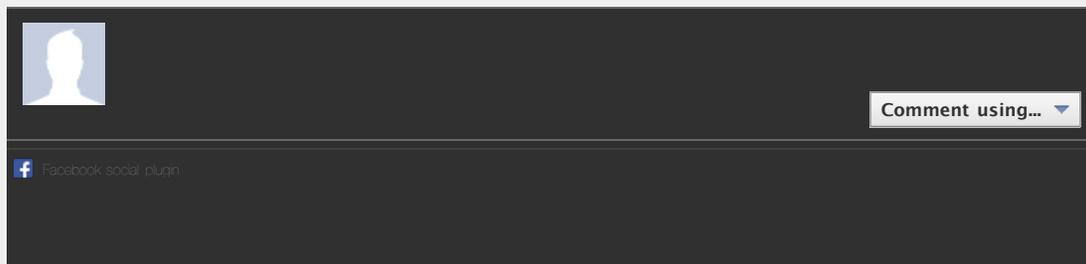
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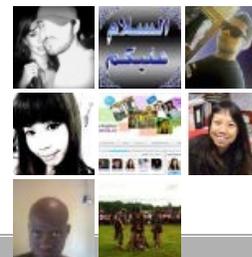
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