



Outlaw's at The Capital Hotel

Words: Coco Khan
 22-24 Basil Street, SW3
www.outlaws.co.uk/restaurants

Let me begin this review by saying 'five stars'. We don't do stars here, but if we did this would be five. As a reviewer visiting restaurants in and around London's finest borough you would be surprised at quite how many eateries, venues that can charge more than nearly anywhere else in the country, fail to inspire. Perhaps it's a glib attitude toward the affluent diner, the assumption that despite a diner's likely familiarity with a range of well-executed cuisines, they might care less about throwing their money away. This is simply not true, and one restaurant that takes their food, their service, and their value for money very seriously is Outlaw's. And my, it is refreshing.

Contrary to what the name might tell you, Outlaw's is not a cowboy themed Tex-Mex restaurant. It is in fact, a wonderful seafood establishment named after its mastermind, two-Michelin-starred Nathan Outlaw. Outlaw's at The Capital is the London arm of the Cornish Outlaw's which is regularly named as one of Britain's best restaurants. It's a modest restaurant seating around 40, which makes it feel all the more special.





We start with the lobster risotto, a warm, velvet and comforting concoction that lasts for a lifetime on the palate, throwing in zingy spikes of orange and basil. The level of harmony in the bowl is higher than I have seen in a long time and I am sad to see the plate finished. My guest tucks into the raw scallops with bacon, apple and beetroot, and is won over by how refreshing this medley is. It feels like eating crisp salad on a hot summer day, with contrasting textures with each bite.

For main I tuck into a mighty fillet of turbot, perfectly cooked, falling off in flakes that would make an M&S advert weep. Topped with a salty seaweed butter and complimented with turnips and potatoes that are almost fondant like in their clean and consistent texture, I am baffled at how something so simple (or at least on first appearance looks simple) could carry such depth of flavour. My guest opts for the meaty monkfish. I don't sample his as that would involve sharing some of my own and neither of us are willing to do this – but he tells me the monkfish has a firm but soft bite, and the adorning vegetables (leeks, mushrooms with parsley and garlic) hang perfectly with earthiness.


By the time we move to dessert, we are full to brim, having quaffed heartily on wine imported by the owner from his own vineyard. We share a chocolate and lime tart, a beautiful looking pud, dark brown with gratings of lime green zest shining from it – but are defeated by its opulence in a matter of spoonfuls. The staff, particularly the sommelier, are learned and passionate about the venue, and are willing to talk at length about it. They can share a laugh and their enthusiasm is infectious. Indeed, if there's one thing that stands out from the experience it's quite how passionate everyone involved in this humble restaurant is. The food is clearly crafted with care, the drinks chosen with vigour, and the staff acting with pride in their professionalism. It's no surprise that Outlaw's at The Capital has one itself a Michelin star recently, and I suspect this won't be the last we hear from it.



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