



Restaurant Review: Mondiall Restaurant in the V&A Waterfront is out of the world!

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After a superb sail around Table Bay, for the media launch of the Cape2Rio Yacht Race, during which we were escorted back into the harbour by a school of dolphins, my birthday lunch at Mondiall, previously The Green Dolphin, was a super spoil on Friday, both by Nicolette Waterford and the restaurant.

Mondiall is co-owned by Chef Peter Tempelhoff, Executive Chef of the McGrath Collection and **Eat Out** Top 10 Chef of The Greenhouse, and Patrick Symington, previous owner of Café Dharma and Asoka. Chef Peter remains at the McGrath Collection (we were told Mrs McGrath has eaten there four times since the restaurant opened at the beginning of the month), and pops in regularly. Patrick was in the restaurant on Friday, and was a most charming host, sitting down at our table to chat. I asked Patrick about their incorrect spelling of '*Mondiall*,



meaning around the world, apt for the V&A Waterfront location as South Africa's leading tourist attraction. Patrick had a most plausible esoteric explanation for it numerologically (it's a very lucky number 8, and balanced too), as well as design wise, the two legs of the 'M' balancing with the two 'l's at the end of the word! He said that it is a unique word, and is theirs now! Patrick is involved in solar heating now, when he is not at Mondiall. He said that they are *'in for the long haul'* with the restaurant, having signed a lease for 5 years, with an option to renew for a further five. Patrick led the staff in singing for my birthday! Chef Oliver Cattermole is one of my favourite chefs, having met him when he was at [Dash at the Queen Victoria Hotel](#), whereafter he had a short stint at the former [What's On](#), and then he worked at the [Le Franschhoek Hotel](#) before joining and setting up the kitchen at Mondiall, the menu design being a partnership between Chefs Peter and Oliver. Suzanne Taylor, previously of former Constantia Uitsig, was a gracious Restaurant Manager.



The interior is industrial in look, with neutral cream walls, and little decor. Nicolette and I sat at a side section facing Table Mountain, and here mirrors bring the reflection of the water into the restaurant. In our section a huge aircon pipe in silver foil ran along its length. Seating was lovely old-look tan leather couches and comfortable grey and white houndstooth chairs at dark stained wooden tables. Cutlery is by Eetrite, and there are no table cloths nor material serviettes. There is no sideplate either. We noticed containers of herbs all around the outer edge of the restaurant, including basil and rosemary, which the kitchen uses for its dishes. Inside the main section of the restaurant bottles of wine create a design focus in various sections. There is an upstairs function room, with plantation shutters which were brought in from Argentina, allowing one to open the room to the rest of the restaurant, or to be private. The main section of the restaurant has a row of large steel 'wheels' with downlighters in them.

The menu is a selection of classic dishes from around the world, unique in showing the country and date of origin of most dishes. It is printed on a cream A3 board, with low key branding, and some rules: no cheques allowed, *'no flash or intrusive photography'* (which we did not see while

looking at the menu), and a 12,5% service charge for eight or more persons at a table. The waiter took our order with a very modern iPad, strapped to his hand. We ordered a glass of



Graham Beck Rosé, and a plate of six oysters with lemon and shallot vinegar arrived, as a surprise from the chef, which Nicolette did not share, having an allergic reaction to oysters. A roll wrapped in paper with the Mondiall logo was brought to the table with a



wooden board, with hummus, a round of butter with the Mondiall logo, as well as red wine salt which came with a miniature wooden spoon. One uses the paper of the roll as a sideplate. Nicolette and I talked so much that our waiter had to come back a number of times to take our order. It is hard to choose from the many options available. I kept it fishy, and ordered Seafood Ceviche (R86), which the menu told us comes from Lima in Peru from as long ago as 13 AD! It is served with lime, sour cream panna cotta, and crispy sesame wontons. I had not thought about the seafood contents, and noted some cut up mussels, to which I am



allergic. The service excellence of the restaurant was demonstrated when one of the hostesses asked if she could take the plate and have the mussels removed, and so I asked her if they could take out the onions too. It was a refreshing dish, perfect for the heat of the day. Nicolette raved about her Baby Spinach Salad (R68), which originates from Lombardy in Italy from about 1000 years ago. Chef Oliver said it was a very popular dish when he worked at The Ivy in London. A Caesar Salad (R78), Mondiall Waldorf Salad (R78), soup of the day (R53), Chirashizushi (described as '*scattered sushi*', at R129), their very popular Buffalo Wings (R68), and Steak Tartar (R87) are also available as starters. Gnocchi, Ramen noodles, Risotto Nero, and Omelette Arnold Bennett (served with haddock and gruyère) are intermediate dishes, some available in two sizes.



For her main course Nicolette chose Fish Tacos (R72/R132), which comes from Mexico and is about 360 years old, which was served with a soft flour tortilla, 'spiced cape fish', pico de gallo (a condiment made from chilli, and chopped onions and tomatoes),



guacamole, and smoked chilli. I ordered a Half Pint of Prawns (R120), which originates from the UK, a dish that is about 50 years old, served with a lemon and cocktail sauce. Underneath the prawns there was lettuce and guacamole. I had asked the waiter whether it was a Marie Rose sauce, and he said yes, but it was a spicy tomato sauce, which Chef Oliver replaced for me with a traditional Marie Rose sauce. Other Seafood dishes are West Coast oysters at R20 each, fish of the day (R120), grilled lobster hollandaise (R345), and fish and chips (R95). A 'Plateau de Fruits de Mer' for two to share costs R1400. Meat dishes include chicken breast (R132), grilled sirloin Café de Paris (R165), Cape Malay lamb curry (R144), and cheeseburger and fries (R120). One can order side dishes of market vegetables, salads, spinach, jasmine rice, and fries (R18 – R28). Ceramic plates made by Diana Ferreira in a blue/grey are beautiful and elegant.



Nicolette and I shared a Vanilla Panna Cotta, mainly for the mention of the Chenin Blanc poached strawberries served with it and pink peppercorn shortbread (R60)! Other desserts are apple tarte tatin, Cape malva pudding, Mondiall chocolate sundae, baked cheesecake, maple and pecan pie, and baked camembert, most costing around R60.

Chef Oliver came to chat after the worst pressure of service was over, and proudly told us that he



did 50 covers for breakfast, 118 for lunch, and 130 were booked for dinner on Friday. He is loving working there, and working with Chef Peter, even though he works all day every day of the week. They have just introduced a Tapas menu for mid-afternoons, and Brunch on Saturdays and Sundays, which includes 90% of the lunch and breakfast dishes. They sell 1000 oysters a week, he shared.

The winelist has a similar look to the menu, also in cream, in a smaller size, and branded with Moët & Chandon. It is a mere listing, with no details other than the vintage. Moët & Chandon Brut NV is sold at R150 per glass, R750 per bottle, and R1600 per magnum. Verve Clicquot Rosé costs R795, and Dom Perignon 2003 R2395. Boschendal Brut and Graham Beck Rosé are sold by the glass at R45 and R 230 per bottle. L'Ormarins, Charles Fox Rosé, Boschendal, and Sacchetto Fili Prosecco Spumante are also offered. Four to five wines per variety are available. Shiraz is available from R46/R138 by Vondeling Baldrick 2012, to Luddite at R595. The winelist includes Chef Peter and Adam Mason's Yardstick and Marvelous wines.



We loved the setting, the easy-goingness (we spent about three hours at the restaurant!), the option of having two sizes of many of the dishes, the interesting menu, the friendliness of the staff, and the service proactiveness. Our waiter was not fully au fait with all the dishes, providing incorrect information. The lack of material serviettes and table cloths, the lack of side plates, the phone problems when booking, and variable background music are minor hiccups which can be fixed.

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@Mondiall_SA Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner Monday – Sunday. Brunch Saturdays and Sundays.

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