



Waitrose Illustrated - June 2006

Arrive early if you are dining at Room. That way, you'll have plenty of time to take in the impressive Venetian Gothic architecture of this former Reform Club, which dates back to 1871. Ascend the grand staircase, marvel at the panelled ceilings, and enjoy cocktails in sumptuous surroundings. The brightly lit bar stands out among the shiny black tables, dark woods and huge red lampshades. Beyond, the 110-cover restaurant features long runs of tables - great for parties - and plenty of quieter spots for romantic moments.

Restaurants with such a wide-ranging clientele can misjudge service, but at Room it is near faultless.

The restaurant offers a quirky, retro menu with a contemporary twist to dishes. A starter of deliciously creamy kedgeree with quail's egg (£5) was truly wonderful. From a short list of specials, I chose a succulent char-grilled swordfish steak (£15). Served with a nicely balanced mango salad, this dish was a winner.

We drank Oveja Negra (£17), an interesting Chardonnay and Viognier blend, and gazed upon the medieval-style fireplaces and the wallpaper emblazoned with thistles, as we selected our desserts. My lemon meringue pie (£5) was a deconstructed version of the classic, the individual elements arranged around the plate, accompanied by a delicious lemon sorbet. We elected to forgo coffee in favour of coffee martinis (£6). It turned out to be a wise decision - they were delicious.