

Dining Out



Making Waves

Review by Peter Myers


Surely Bangkok's top seafood venue, The Oriental, Bangkok's Lord Jim's has undergone a major, glitzy, out-of-character transformation to bring an extravagant fine dining experience to town.

Named after Lord Jim, a seafaring character created by novelist Joseph Conrad who visited the hotel in 1888, diners at Lord Jim's (and there was a throng of them the night I visited) will immediately notice the marine inspiration of the furnishings: a 16-metre aquarium of multi-coloured fish runs along the entrance corridor; bright blue carpets; jelly fish wall designs; and a hundred more canny, aquatic touches contrast dramatically with the elegant neo-colonial signature style of the Oriental Bangkok.

It is common to hear seafood restaurants claiming the freshest and choicest fish, but at Lord Jim's it is hard not to believe the PR. And, as soon as you have negotiated the Iced Seafood Tower, you will, I'm afraid, be a junkie. Have a chilled, sweet Riesling to hand when negotiating this colossal platter of crustacean delights, which includes Poached Shellfish, full-flavoured Sashimi and Fresh Rock Oysters. The Caesar Salad was also an effective accompaniment, and seemed to contain more vibrant and diverse taste sensations than others I had previously attempted.

Choosing a main is tricky here, as everything looks intriguing. I managed to stop the carnivore in me screaming for the Roast Herb Crusted Rack of Australian Free Range Lamb, and opted for the Char-Grilled Cajun Spiced Salmon Tornadoes on Sweet Corn-Potato Mousseline served with Black Olive-Eggplant Confit and Mixed Herb Beurre Blanc. A wise choice which aroused the envy of everyone else around my table and curious glances from fellow diners seated nearby.

A romantic and especially well-appointed feature of Lord Jim's are the curtained-off areas for pre- or after-dinner drinks with million-dollar views of Bangkok's Chao Phraya River. Another funky aspect here is the open kitchen design with active stations/islands, where several skilled looking chefs prepare a dazzling assortment of underwater delights. To further enhance the dining ambiance, there is a highly talented live band performing nightly: a trio of American-Brazilian musicians who play a mellow blend of jazz with South American rhythms.

Dessert, I hear you ask? I wish I could say that I did indulge in Baked Berry Crepe with Honey-Poppy Seed Ice-Cream or the White Chocolate 'Coquille St Jacques,' but sadly I was at bursting point and had to be wheel-barrowed out to the nearest boat. 



Lord Jim's at The Oriental Bangkok
Tel: + 66 2 659 9000, www.mandarinoriental.com



An Organic Feast

An ultra-healthy restaurant is quietly working to introduce organic cuisine to Bangkok.


With a growing interest in the foods we eat, and especially with GMO's being one of the major topics in the press at present, all things organic are becoming almost mainstream. Organic foods as prescribed by **Amaranth** are 'those that are grown or produced without the use of chemically formulated fertilisers, growth stimulants, antibiotics or pesticides' - and thankfully this does not mean that meat-eaters are overlooked.

An open-plan restaurant where one has the choice of watching the chefs in action, or your dinner date; one is immediately struck by the simplicity of it all: no clutter; light, bright natural colours and tones; and an aroma of essential oils (lemongrass for the girls, neroli for the guys) - the ideal place for a business meal or a romantic dinner.

With a limited range of organic wines (they are extremely difficult to source in Thailand - but 16 are on offer by the glass), the menu here has a unique fusion style where you are not sure if it is Mexican, Thai, Chinese, French or Japanese, but elements of all prevail. Chilli content, vegetarian dishes and items such as those with a dairy component are clearly marked.

The Amaranth Salad with Organic Rocket Leaves came highly recommended, as did the Chicken with Pumpkin Seeds served with Coriander Rice. The Charmoula of Organic Prawns, a North African-inspired dish served with *pak choy*, was well balanced with just the right amount of spice.

With dishes using ingredients like Szechwan pepper and Lapsang Souchong Tea, rarely seen on menus in Bangkok, a slightly sinful Thai Rice Wine Jelly with Berries (USD 2.5), Organic Cappuccino or a remedial Lemon Thyme Tea are options for afters.

With obvious attention to detail, and maintaining a casually formal level of both service and ambience, Amaranth is a breath of fresh air in Bangkok's polluted dining scene. - JK 



Amaranth, Sukhumvit 31 (on the corner), Bangkok. Open daily for lunch and dinner. Tel: + 66 2662 0795.


A Healthy Glow

Review by Peter Myers

Rosy cheeks and a very content digestive system are signs that you have just dined at Metropolitan's Glow.

Appropriately adjacent to COMO Shambhala, Metropolitan's spa; and as sleek, minimal and slick as you would expect from an eatery at Bangkok's hippest hotel, **Glow** serves only fresh food in the form of snacks, light meals and energising juices. Here, Executive Chef Amanda Gale, dedicated to creating the freshest local produce, showcases her quirky, organic dishes.

A far cry from tasteless health farm grub, sip an invigoratingly electric Pineapple Fizz (with lime, mint and ginger, creating a rather unique flavour) while perusing the surprisingly well-stocked menu. The Set Lunch or Dinner is a good option, incredibly reasonable (lunch is just under USD 10), and includes the divine Grilled Tiger Prawns, Hummus, Tabbouleh Salad & Grilled Bread; the hummus is pumpkiny in consistency - and oddly, in taste - is particularly scrumptious.

However, you'll have to go a la carte to try the most taste-bud-titillating dish I have tried for a long time: Seared Fish wrapped in Indian Pastry, Tomato, and Lentil & Black Mustard Seed Sauce with Mint Yoghurt. If healthy eating is this fun, I am keen to do much more of it - a notion only reinforced after swilling down the sublime Carrot & Walnut Cake with a huge mug of Organic Latté. 



Glow at the Metropolitan Bangkok, 27, South Sathorn Road, Tel: + 66 2635 3366, www.metropolitan.como.bz. Open daily: 6 am to 9 pm

