

# Food doesn't match setting

Your traveling taster visits area eateries and rates them on a 100-point scale. Up to 30 points are awarded for ambiance, which includes general atmosphere and service, 55 points for food, and 15 points for price/quality rating. A total count of 55 points or less indicates a restaurant is not recommended; 56-74 points signify from passing to good; 75-89 points designate very good with some extraordinary features, and 90-100 points show that a very special dining experience awaits you.

ARCHIBALD'S, 555 S. Woodward, Birmingham (842-9400), offers a relaxed, genteel dinner atmosphere that is very comfortable. The bar was redone last summer, and the setting is attractive and welcoming. It is large and

## Comedy troupe giving show

Dr. Science and his pals of National Public Radio's "Duck's Breath Mystery Theatre" will appear at 8 p.m. Friday, Feb. 21, at the Music Hall Center in Detroit.

This engagement is presented by Music Hall Center, in association with WDET-FM.

Tickets are \$12.50 and \$10.50. For more information, call 963-7622 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays-Fridays.

The comedy troupe is composed of former students at the University of Iowa, now living in San Francisco. The group was formed in Iowa City in 1975. The performers are featured daily on the National Public Radio and Ameri-

can Public Radio hook-up, heard in the Detroit area on WDET-FM, WEMU-FM and WJON-FM.

Satire is accentuated in Duck's Breath's question-and-answer segment, "Ask Dr. Science," a regular highlight on WDET and WEMU's "Morning Edition." Other specialties are "Danno's Sensitive Male Hotline," heard on NPR's news show "All Things Considered," and a new parody on the world of supersports, "Stump the Stallion," heard on NPR's "Morning Edition."

The stage show brings to life a collection of short sketches, absurd characters (from their radio work, as well as stage and television), odd costumes and general misinformation.

## Senegalese dancers perform

The National Dance Company of Senegal will perform dances that reflect the folklore and legends of its African nation.

The performance is at 8 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 22, at the Music Hall in Detroit. Ticket prices are \$18, \$15 and \$14. To order tickets by phone, call the Music Hall box office at 963-7622 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays-Fridays. Tickets also are available at all Hudson's and Ticket World outlets.

The company consists of 40 dancers, singers and musicians. The program, inspired by folk traditions, includes acrobats, stillwalkers, a human spinning top, a human haystack and small vignettes of African life.

The musicians use traditional Senegalese instruments, such as the balafon, a marimba-like keyboard, and the Cora, a 21-string, melodic harp made from a giant gourd.

## a counting for taste



**D. Gustibus**

nor took almost two hours and 15 minutes but could have been shorter had we so desired. **SERVICE** — 15 points maximum. Points awarded — 12.

Archibald's sampler, a selection of seafood and pate at \$6.80, was disappointing. The oysters had a strong taste, not at all delicate, and the smoked salmon was mushy. The few shrimp were good, but the pate was too strong. Our group did not finish sampling the sampler. The baked brie with apples and almonds (\$3.95) was unusual. We could not taste the brie because of the very heavy sweet sauce over it, and the dish has an unexpected, but not unpleasant, taste. Tops in this category were the garlic bread sticks, which were fresh and hot. The drinks were just right. **DRINKS, APPETIZERS AND BREAD** — 10 points maximum. Points awarded — 6.

Garden salads are included with the entrees, and they were fresh and crisp. The different dressings were good although they were spooned on top, not mixed through the salads. The salad ingredients showed care in selection and presentation. **SALAD** — 5 points maximum. Points awarded — 4.

Entrees were a real let-down. The prime rib (a specialty, according to our waiter, at \$13.95) was thinly cut and almost without taste at all. The broiled Norwegian salmon (a recommended daily special at \$15.95) was also extremely bland and forgettable. A note on the menu indicated we could order fish "Cajun-style" — the latest rage — so we tried swordfish that way. While it was spicy, the dish was not truly Cajun, just blackened/almost burned. It was

the best of the three but not at all in the same league with, for example, Louisiana Purchase's food in Windsor. Vegetable garnishes served with the entrees were cooked nicely. **ENTREE, VEGETABLES AND GARNISHES** — 30 points maximum. Points awarded — 21.

The selection of desserts was better. The Chambord hummer, \$4.25, had a rich raspberry taste and a creamy consistency. The chocolate mint flan, \$3.25, was light and minty. The Bananas Foster were not flambéed at the table and lacked cinnamon, but we enjoyed them. **DESSERT AND COFFEE** — 10 points maximum. Points awarded — 8.

Although the setting is attractive, the food was expensive at \$70 per couple. The dishes are bland and unimaginative. Perhaps that will appeal to some patrons who are more interested in the atmosphere than in exciting food, but you can expect to pay for it. **PRICE/VALUE** — 15 points maximum. Points awarded — 10.

A Counting for Taste — 100 points maximum. Total points awarded: 74. Archibald's needs to make its food as appealing as its redone appearance in order to offer a really first-class experience.

D. Gustibus welcomes your reactions, comments and suggestions of favorite restaurants in the Observer & Eccentric communities. Write to D. Gustibus, in care of Observer & Eccentric, Entertainment Department, P.O. Box 3503, Birmingham 48012-0503.



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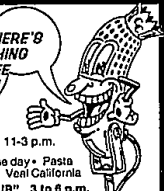
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