

The Bijou: expensive but nice

Welcome to A Counting for Taste, a new column with a new approach for reviewing restaurants. Your traveling taster will be visiting a wide range of area eateries and rating each of them on a 100-point scale. As you will see below, separate categories are identified, weighted and scored. Up to 50 points may be awarded for ambience (which includes general atmosphere and service); 55 points are

a counting for taste by D. Gustibus

available for food; and 15 points are the maximum possible for a price/value rating.

The Bijou Restaurant, 30855 South-

field Road in Southfield (644-5522), offering both tables and booths (some featuring pictures of movie stars). Reservations are recommended, especially on weekends.

GENERAL ATMOSPHERE — 15 points maximum. Points awarded — 12. The Bijou is not a softly lighted, romantic restaurant in spite of its high prices. The walls could use a little more water and the lighting could be a bit more subdued. Flowers on the tables would help. The general atmosphere is just a bit business-like, and the restaurant seems suited for entertaining clients.

SERVICE — 15 points maximum. Points awarded — 13. Service at the Bijou was very good. Our weekend reservation was honored promptly. At the table the waiter was attentive and helpful. Service was laudatory, and the meal took 2 1/2 hours for our party of four. The only criticism of our waiter was his subtle, but very regular, pushing of many of the most expensive menu items. This is the only reason that service was not rated a full 15 points. The busman did an unusually competent job.

DRINKS, APPETIZERS, BREAD — 10 points maximum. Points awarded — 10. Drinks were full strength, rolls were warm and fresh, and the best eating of the evening was the Detroit stey of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, Tuesday through Oct. 6 at Joe Louis Arena. Other animals on display at "The Greatest Show on Earth" include elephants, bears, zebras, camels, llamas, ponies and dogs. Tickets range from \$5 to \$9. For showtimes or more information, call 587-7500.

SALAD — 5 points maximum. Points awarded — 2. The Caesar salad, made at the table, was poor. The dressing was too strong, with a bitter taste. The regular house salad dressing also was a bit over-powering, and neither salad (\$5.25 each, minimum order of two) was as cold and crisp as it should

have been.

ENTREE, VEGETABLES, GARNISHES — 30 points maximum. Points awarded — 24. The menu offers a wide variety of entree selections, and there also are a number of daily specials. Of the entrees sampled at our dinner, the red snapper was clearly the favorite, both with and without the lemon-caper sauce. The veal chop (at \$26 the most expensive of the entrees) was somewhat tough and not especially tasty. This was particularly unfortunate because the morel mushroom sauce was excellent and deserved a better fate. The vegetables and garnishes were adequate but not exceptional.

DESSERT AND COFFEE — 10 points maximum. Points awarded — 7. We found both good and not-so-good among the desserts. The selection was adequate, but not great. The Mississippi mud cake was dry, very sticky, and all but inedible. Nevertheless, the second high point of the meal, after the appetizers, was the raspberry flambé which was prepared at our table by the waiter. This was a real winner, tempting even the non-dessert eater at our table to take taste after taste.

PRICE/VALUE RATING — 15 points maximum. Points awarded — 12. The total cost for our meal was almost \$90 per couple, without wine, but with a very high-priced appetizer. Normal dinner costs could be as low as \$60 for two, with drinks. Our meal was somewhat over-priced, especially in view of the disappointing quality of some of the dishes.

A COUNTING FOR TASTE — 100 points maximum. Points awarded: 25 out of 30 for ambience plus 43 out of 55 for food plus 12 out of 15 for value equals 80 points. The stars at the Bijou are a little dimmed, but it is still a nice spot for friendly eating, with very good service, if you have the time and the money.

D. Gustibus welcomes your reactions, comments and suggestions of favorite restaurants in the Observer & Eccentric communities. Please write to D. Gustibus, in care of the Observer & Eccentric, Entertainment Department, 1125 Bowers, Birmingham 48012.



second runs Tom Panzenhagen

"Hurricane" (1979), 8 p.m. Friday on Ch. 50. Originally 119 minutes. TV time slot: 120 minutes.

An aside concerning "Hurricane," an insipid remake of "The Hurricane," 1937 John Ford classic: If Mia Farrow doesn't give the most misdirected, miscast, uninspired performance of all time, I'd like to know of one worse. Farrow is a fine actress — within limits — as she's demonstrated in recent collaborations with Woody Allen. But she's as out of place and out of sorts in "Hurricane" as a parakeet in a typhoon. If you know of anyone who's ever given a less credible movie performance, I'd like to hear about it. Write me at the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.

"Tootsie" (1982), 9 p.m. Sunday on Ch. 4. Originally 118 minutes. TV time slot: 120 minutes.

From the ridiculous to the sublime. Dustin Hoffman shines as an out-of-work actor who poses as a woman in order to land a role on TV soap opera. His just-right performance is neither too understated nor too, er, broad, but let's not forget his magnificent supporting cast, either. Jessica Lange (who won a best-supporting-actress Oscar

WHAT'S IT WORTH?
A ratings guide to the movies

Bad\$1
Fair\$2
Good\$3
Excellent\$4

for her part) bounces off him beautifully. Her well-timed, well-measured reactions to Hoffman lend credibility to his character as well as to her own.

And then there are Dabney Coleman, Charles Durning, Bill Murray, Teri Garr and "Tootsie" director Sydney Pollack, who make the absolute most out of well-wrought fringe roles that enhance this already-rich film even more. Like most farce, "Tootsie" becomes a bit trying after a while, and the resolution is a bit too far-fetched. But these are very minor complaints compared to the great praise the movie deserves.

(Incidentally, Hoffman himself would have been an Oscar winner any other year, but this time out the best-actor honors went to Ben Kingsley of "Gandhi" fame.)
Rating: \$3.00.

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