

New Peking restaurant offers delightful dishes

Your traveling taster visits area eateries and rates them on a 100-point scale. Up to 30 points are awarded for ambience, which includes general atmosphere and service; 55 points for food, and 15 points for price/value rating. A total count of 50 points or less indicates a restaurant is not recommended; 60-74 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.

NEW PEKING, 29105 Ford Road, Garden City (415-2250), is a long-established restaurant that changed hands more than four years ago and remains, today, one of the better Chinese eating places in the area. The dining room has a warm and cheerful feeling, with wood paneling and numerous Asian prints, artifacts and lantern-like lights. This clean and bustling place makes you feel welcome and comfortable. The patrons include numerous Asians who appreciate the quality of the cuisine, and the attire ranges from quite casual to business clothes. Cloth table-furnishings, covered with a plastic shield, give a more formal feeling than plastic tablecloths would. Dinner took an hour and a quarter and, although we did not have reservations, we were seated immediately at 7 p.m. Friday. General Atmosphere — 15 points maximum. Points awarded — 13.

The restaurant was quite crowded, but service was very prompt. There were times, in fact, that we felt rushed as, for example, when the waiter brought the check before asking whether we wanted any dessert. In addition to the fortune cookies, we had to ask for more water each time that we needed it, and — no surprise — our dirty silver was carefully removed from our plates and returned, dirty, to the table for the next using.

a counting for taste

D. Gustibus

On the positive side, the employees of the restaurant were all extremely pleasant. Service — 15 points maximum. Points awarded — 10.

In order to try a good sampling of the available hors d'oeuvres, we ordered the Bo Bo Appetizer platter (\$3.75 per person). Each item was excellent. The fried won ton was crisp but not greasy. The shrimp toast had plenty of shrimp and was unusually good. The barbecue spare-ribs were exceptionally lean and had a subtle, pleasing flavor. The fried chicken was juicy but, again, not greasy. The egg roll had a tasty combination of vegetables, and the beef skewer was well flavored and not overcooked. In fact, this outstanding appetizer for two, when ordered by one, would make a delicious, filling and diverse main course. Diners at other tables were clearly enjoying the pot stickers and soups that are also on the menu. Drinks are available but are not a primary attraction. Drinks, Appetizers and Bread — 15 points maximum. Points awarded — 13.

The *Me Shu pork* (\$6.75), assembled at the table by the waiter, was fresh, sweet and spicy, and nicely presented. Although the pancakes themselves were a bit undercooked and a little tough, this was as good a had. The ingredients blended perfectly to provide a delicious meal. The Mongolian beef (\$6.95) also excited our taste buds. The base sauce had a stronger beef flavor than usual, and this provided an unusually rich and hearty taste. This dish is spicy, with lots of green and yellow

onions, and it also had plenty of meat. This was tender and delicious. Both of the entrees we tried were excellent, and we were left very full — but wishing we had room to sample even more. Entree, Vegetables and Garofales 35 points maximum. Points awarded — 33.

After asking our waiter to hold the check and bring us an almond cookie, we were able to try something other than fortune cookies. The almond cookie was thinner than usual but quite tasty. We were disappointed that not as much care was taken with dessert as with the rest of the meal. There are excellent Asian desserts but not here. Dessert — 5 points maximum. Points awarded — 2.

What more can you ask than a filling and satisfying meal at the very reasonable cost of \$30 per couple, including tip? And in spite of the old cliché, we did not feel hungry again until well into the following day. Price/Value — 15 points maximum. Points awarded — 14.

A Counting For Taste — 100 points maximum. Total points awarded: 87. New Peking is just the place if you are in the mood for Chinese cuisine. It was especially pleasing to D. Gustibus to begin my second year of writing and enjoying this column with such a nice restaurant.

D. Gustibus welcomes your reactions, comments and suggestions of favorite restaurants in Observer & Eccentric communities. Write to D. Gustibus, in care of the Observer & Eccentric, Entertainment Department, P.O. Box 3505, Birmingham 48012.



Tom Spackman luxuriates as villainous Richard III

Performances of Shakespeare's "Richard III" continue through Sunday, Nov. 2, at Meadow Brook Theatre on the Oakland University campus in Rochester Hills. For ticket information call the box office at 377-3300.

Meadow Brook's innovative production of "Richard III" verges on melodrama. The hunchbacked king was as malicious, arrogant, and deceitful a character as ever walked the stage, and Shakespeare's artful but immature play about him almost makes an audience want to hiss and boo.

Tom Spackman masterfully portrays Richard as a witty, presumptuous scoundrel whose audacity is almost charming. That is until the trail of blood he leaves dispels the notion.

Richard smirks at the audience after he unveils his dastardly plans. If he'd had a mustache, he'd have twirled it. Tom Spackman's portrayal is almost gleefully villainous. It's fine, down to the loquacious gait of a man crippled both physically and psychologically.

The supporting cast in the Meadow Brook production is not uniformly strong. Thankfully "Richard III" is a tour de force for a strong lead and Tom Spackman is up to the task. Greg Altmeyer who plays Buckingham, Richard's cohort in bloody political manipulations, is excellent. So is director Charles Nolte's decision to cast Joseph Reed as the weak and lascivious King Edward IV and to have Jeanne Arnold play Margaret, the deranged prophetic of doom.

THE MEADOW Brook production takes liberties with Shakespeare's script by preceding Richard's usual opening soliloquy "Now is the winter



Tom Spackman plays the title role and Dona Werner is Lady Anne Neville in Meadow Brook Theatre's "Richard III."

of our discontent . . ." with a pomp-filled presentation of the characters in the play. To modern audiences not intimate with the players in the bloody struggle for power between the Lancasters and Yorks, the introduction may be helpful, and it succeeds in bringing the stage to life immediately.

However, the scene focuses "Richard III" away from what Shakespeare intended it to be, a study of

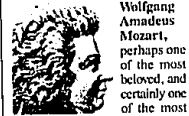
amoral lust for power brought to ruin by subconscious guilt.

"Bloody thou art, bloody will be thy end" is the prophesy Richard fulfills, and the Meadow Brook production is faithful to the ruthlessness of the story. Murders take place on stage and Richard is brought the bloody decapitated head of Lord Hastings as proof of villainy accomplished. Such were politics in the merry old England of Richard's time.

Young Shakespeare embellished the facts of history and made Richard more despicable and more murderous than history records because the play acknowledged the political climate of Shakespeare's time when King Richard was in profound disfavor.

Cathie Breidenbach of West Bloomfield has always loved theater. A former high-school English teacher, she works in public relations, advertising and as a freelance writer.

MOZART



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