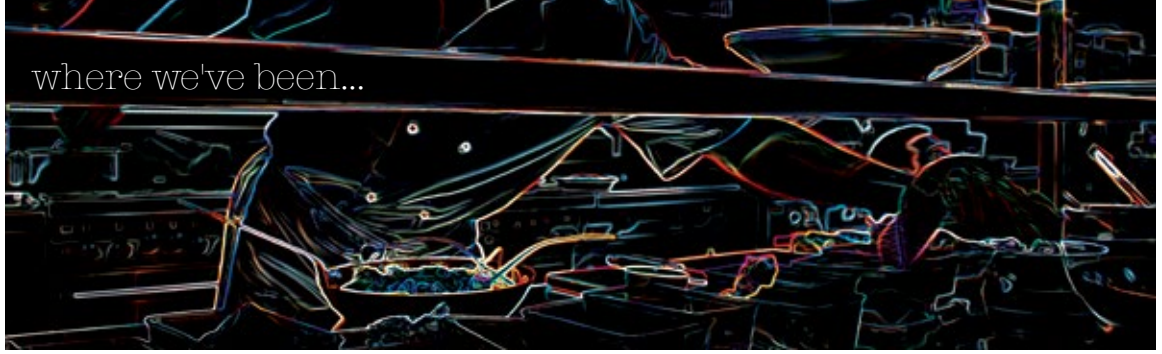


where we've been...



AMBARVALE HOTEL

Close friends of mine live in Newcastle. The couple are much younger than me and their family journey is just beginning. Yes Ray and Rach recently had a baby girl, Quinn. Because of Covid, I hadn't seen them for quite a while and three months after her birth, I had still not met Quinn. A midmorning weekday text message changed all that.

"Hey mate - are you up in Campbelltown today?" read the text from Ray, who is a born and bred Campbelltown boy. "I can be...?" was my reply. Turns out the couple, with Quinn in tow, had to make a quick dash to Ray's parents in Ruse and stayed the night. We decided on Ambarvale Hotel for lunch. This couple love craft beer and good food. Newcastle has so many options. Campbelltown does not. Thank goodness for Ambarvale Hotel.

Apart from their own cracking beers, the 'beers on tap board' reads like a wonderland for craft beer lovers: Akasha; Fixation; Capital; Holgate... the list goes on. I went for a Pete's Pacific Ale, one of Ambarvale Brewing's own beers. It's a tasty, easy drinking beer - and it's \$6 a schooner! I don't order it because it's cheap - but it's cheap.

The new parents both went for Balter's Eazy Hazy - the lowest alcohol (ABV) on the board. Obviously we had some chatting to do and I got to know sweet little Quinn, but eventually we decided it was lunchtime.

The Ambarvale Hotel menu is extensive but somehow Rach and I end up with the same order - Lamb Souvlaki Skewers. Ray chose Fish Tacos and settled back into catching up and 'goeing and gaaing' at Quinn. The smitten couple are still in that stage of just staring and smiling - and Quinn is a smiler so it's easy to waste lots of time doing just that.

We loved our lunch, sitting quietly out in The Greenery. Being midweek and early, we had it to ourselves. Only a friendly (and suitably) bearded man stopped by to check that everything was good with our lunch. The modern pub interpretation of Lamb Souvlaki Skewers is one of my faves. Thai Beef Salad was taken down a similar path by hotel chefs - I love that one too.

You might have guessed that I'm a fan of Ambarvale Hotel. It's an inviting but vast space with high quality food and the best selection of craft beers in the district. The pub has added an outdoor precinct now so there is even more potential for your lifestyle and Ambarvale Hotel to come together.