

## 59 GRILL Mount Annan

Do you love great food in a casual environment? The people of Mount Annan now have one such dining option and it's not Asian food. Mount Annan has a lot of Asian dining options. A lot! 59 Grill offers a big difference. Basically it's contemporary pub food, without the pokies and the chance of running into Barney (Simpsons). Some families would never choose to take their kids to a pub. 59 Grill presents simple food really well, in a small, casual suburban restaurant.

I dined there recently with Sophia Loren. I wasn't sure how the fussy Italian would go with what appeared to be pub style food. "I'm not fussy, I just have high standards," Sophia repeated a number of times that night. It was however, a happy ending. A very happy ending.

The only disappointment of the night was that 59 Grill was not licensed. "It looks like it should be licensed," Sophia said, already yearning for the velvety comfort of a shiraz vognier, "...or any other red really." We spoke to owner Sue Ann, who apologised and assured us that the liquor license was only weeks away, i.e. by the time you're reading this.

We chatted and perused the menu. Our selections came together fairly easily. "Chilli Squid and Garlic Prawns for entree please," we told our waitress. "And we will share the Mix Plate for main please."

Our entrees arrived and they provided a reassuring taste of things to come. The food is

very good. Both our entrees were excellent. The squid was tender and tasty and every trace of the Amatriciana style sauce was scooped out of the customary black pot. Sophia wore white - almost entirely. My first attempt to scoop a prawn from the molten sauce was a fail and it landed back in the pot. Sophia reeled in horror at the imaginary mess all over her top. "Nothing," I said looking across the table. She continued to search her top before declaring a spot had been found. "Nothing," I repeated. "Do you think I could possibly be OCD?" she smiled, before looking down once more at her top. I quoted some Lady Macbeth to her. It wasn't really all that relevant but it was funny and Sophia is educated so she got the joke.

We were now excited for our main, and that excitement was well founded. The platter looked amazing and tasted better. Pork Belly, Chorizo, Chicken Wings, Scotch Fillet, Pork Ribs with dipping sauces and sautéed potatoes. We started with the pork belly. Sophia very deliberately chopped two 'even' pieces, before taking the biggest piece. "Crackling is so important to me," she declared. "I might walk out if it's not crackly." This from the girl who is not fussy - remember? With surgical skill Sophia then removed the crackling back to bare skin. She sampled it gazing thoughtfully into the wall beside us, paused and then triumphantly declared she would be staying for the rest of the evening. I smiled and shook my head.

Every element of this platter was superb. The ribs were outstanding. Sophia pointed out that she was unable to back up that

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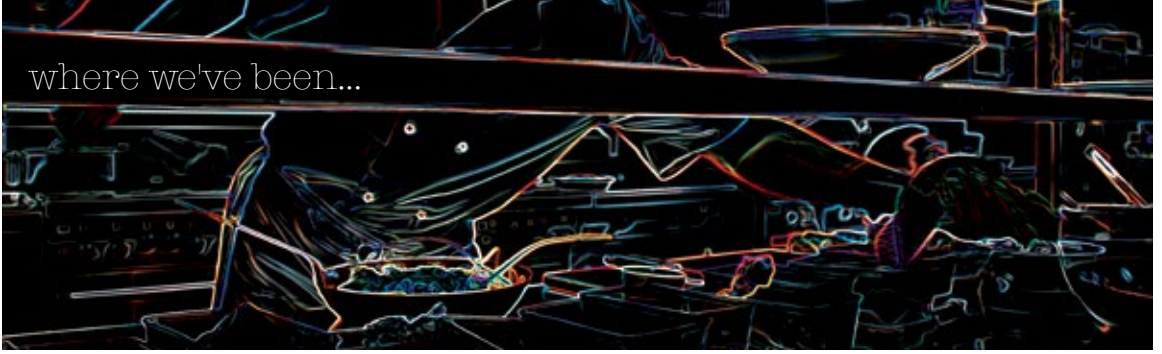


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statement because I took the biggest ribs and her sample was insufficient to create a strong opinion - pft! Chicken wings - yum! The Chorizo is very high quality - which is extremely important to me. I simply will not eat cheap Chorizo. The steak too was very high quality.

Sue Ann then enquired about dessert. My polite decline was drowned out by a firm, decisive, "Yes!" Sue Ann laughed and then recommended the 59 Grill signature dessert. Sue Ann then stood talking about business and my magazine with us for the next ten minutes or so. Meantime, our diligent waitress who had obviously overheard our order, turned up with a platter of donuts. Well played!

We didn't finish the dessert but I'm glad we sampled it. In-house chocolate and strawberry sauces provided sticky sweetness for our plump little donuts. Yum!

Add 59 Grill to your list. Yes it's simple food, but done really well. That is in fact a great recipe. I will be back. My boys will love it.