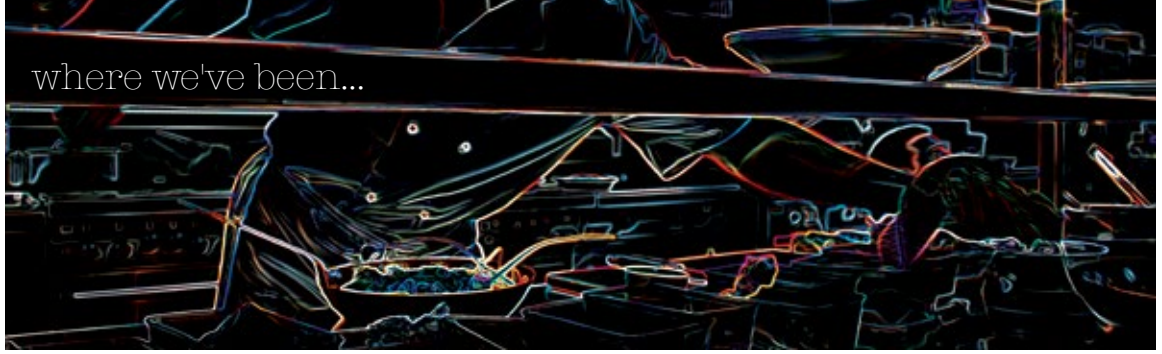


where we've been...



MENENAGLE COUNTRY CLUB

We met for our belated Christmas lunch in January, in front of the bar inside the beautiful boutique club. The problem was that we appeared to be waiting for bar service and I had to wave a few people through who had lined up behind us. Eventually everyone was ready to order a drink. I had originally wanted to order a bottle of bubbles but with Lisa not in attendance and magazine photographer Kylie a nondrinker, it didn't seem viable. The round became a standard array of beverages: Pirate Life Pale Ale for me; Cedar Creek Cider for Adam and Dean; a glass of bubbles for Kirsty; Diet Coke for Kylie. We headed outside to the picturesque courtyard separating the historic Menangle House from the ultra modern club. Huge old trees add atmosphere and cooling shade to the equation.

"Cheers!" I smiled, extending my drink to our crew: Kirsty my righthand; Adam and Dean who create the adventure articles; photographer Kylie. I gave a little speech thanking the team for their generosity of time, effort and goodwill towards me and the magazine. "I am well aware of the goodwill that surrounds the magazine - we all know goodwill starts from within. Thank you."

While chatting everyone scanned the QR code and checked out the menu. If you haven't dined at Menangle Country Club for a while, the new menu is outstanding. It reads wonderfully well with many tempting options. I wanted to shout my team lunch without mak-

ing a big fuss and once I noticed the share platters on the menu, I knew exactly how that would play out. "How about we have a seafood platter and a meat platter?" was met with universal agreement.

I went inside to the bar to order a Hot & Cold Seafood Platter and Thor's Hammer Braised Beef Shank Platter but when the staff member warned me the shank would take, "about an hour," I switched to the Tomahawk Steak Platter. I added a Grilled Peach and Halloumi Salad.

Longtime readers will know that my 'reviews' range from, "if you don't have anything good to say - say nothing," to gushing, glowing recommendations. This one is of the latter category. Our food was brilliant. Isn't it a joy when you treat family, friends or staff to a meal and it turns out to be amazing... The platters presented like they were for a special occasion and evoked genuine excitement upon arrival. There was plenty to go around the 5 of us. Kirsty and I scoffed all the oysters that anybody passed on. Lobsters and Dory pieces were skilfully divided, while king prawns and salt and pepper squid were politely shared. Crunchy fries and fresh tropical fruits were picked at while we continued our holiday catch up.

The Tomahawk was easily shared until we got to the bone. Adam and I went to work removing every morsel of meat from the giant bone. There was an offer to pick it up and go all 'hunter gatherer' on it - but unsurprisingly

there were no takers. It was served with a plate of thinly sliced baked chaat masala potatoes, yoghurt and tamarind dressing. That side was a big hit with everyone. Our salad was a delight too - Grilled Peach and Halloumi with crisp prosciutto, pine nuts, red onions, mesclun and a sweet citrus dressing.

This was a wonderful social event dampened slightly by the couple of inabilities. Our food was sublime, the service helpful and professional and the alfresco ambience perfect for our casual, fun (read loud) gathering. The new menu places Menangle Country Club as the top of your 'to-do' list - get there!