

where we've been...



THE ROYAL HOTEL Camden

The Royal Hotel Camden is bringing a touch of the Eastern Suburbs to Camden. Just the good bits, not the tosser attitudes. Paddington has some excellent hotels where great food is presented in welcoming and comfortable surroundings. Those are the bits that Martin and Vanessa Sinclair are bringing to Camden, along with great big chunks of undeniably Camden of course.

The couple have lived in Camden for quite a few years now and were very quickly given honorary locals status. For what they have done with The Royal (and for what they are about to do) they should be given the keys to the city. What are they about to do? Keep reading...

I arrived at The Royal to find Martin sitting in the sports bar with a couple of mates. I sat down and we talked over a couple of Peroni Leggeras. These are one of the best mid strength beers on the market. One standard drink per bottle. Perfect. "Who are you dining with?" Martin asked. "I'm on my own," I said. "So with us?" he grimaced. "We will have the kids with us," he continued with a screwed up face. "Ha, ha, that's fine," I assured him. "You sure?" he asked earnestly.

It wasn't just their kids either. I met a lovely local couple David and Estée, and their three children, the youngest maybe two years old. I love kids and yes it was a wild night with six kids under ten running around in very familiar surroundings, but none of them were naughty or excessive. "It's like their home," Vanessa explained. Yes, they were very at ease. After

the kids finished dinner, Vanessa arranged them in one of the new booths at the back of the dining room. I'm sure they weren't intended to be used as a crèche but it was effective in keeping their collective energy a little contained - a little.

Have you seen The Royal's dining room lately? Apart from the booths, new furniture has been added and the layout rearranged. New lighting too. It's hard to come up with a more beautiful hotel dining room in Macarthur. And as I hinted earlier there is more to come - much more. The already huge pub is about to be doubled in size with a number of distinct precincts for different styles of dining and relaxing. A modern cuisine separate restaurant, a cocktail bar, a sports bar, a function room plus this main dining room which is complete, for now.

Our night started in the ocean with oysters kilpatrick, and then headed for the pastures of Mount Hunter. A business partner in the Royal is breeding Black Angus beef cattle at his Mount Hunter property. Branded Mount Hunter Black Angus Beef, the superb produce is available at The Royal in all shapes and forms. Head Chef, Chris McGrath loves the opportunity to work directly with a local farmer and to have faith in such a wonderful product. We tried just about everything on the 'from the pasture' section of the menu. Our table was covered in dishes which we passed around and shared: Slow Roasted Glazed Short Ribs; Smoked Brisket; Charred Flank; 450g Dry Aged Rib Eye.

Have no fear, this is superb produce, and Chris is a talented and dedicated Chef. He is



breakfast, brunch, lunch

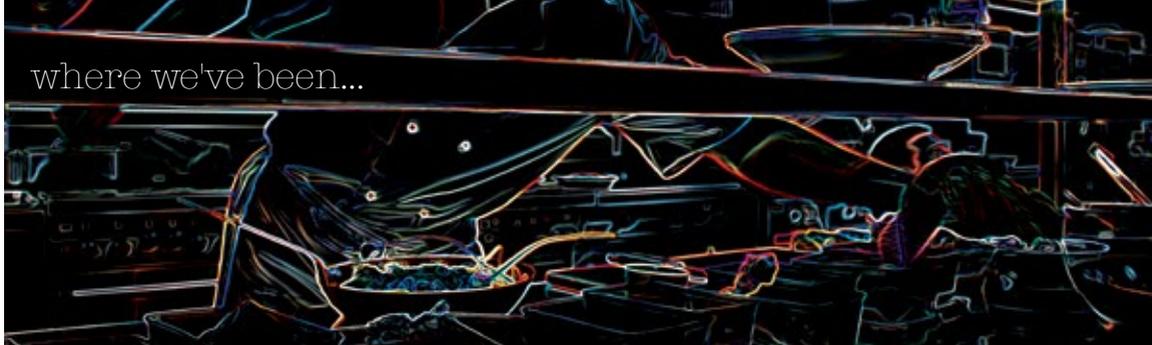


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at work early every day smoking his brisket and preparing the other slow cooked meats. Everything we sampled was superb quality and full of wonderful smokey flavours.

Go back to The Royal and enjoy the stylish surroundings and great food. It's one of our best.