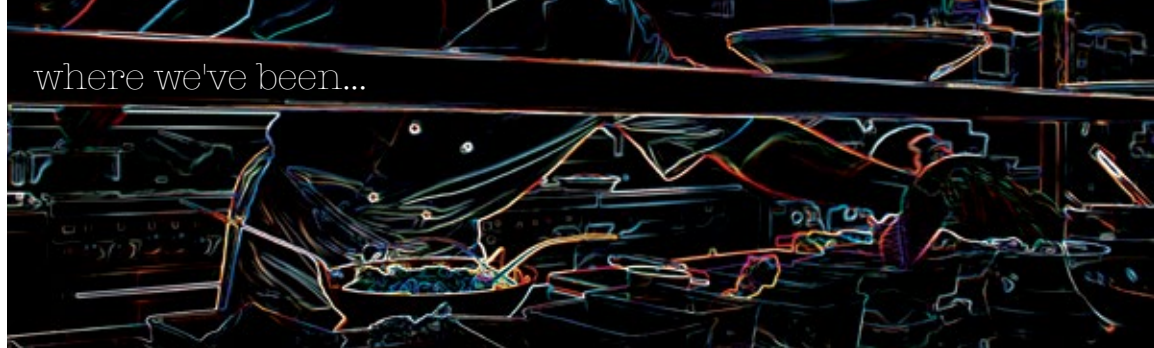


where we've been...



NURIYAH Gregory Hills

You might have noticed I have been spending a lot of time catching up with my kids since the lockdown. Anyone who has their own adult kids will understand how hard the last few months have been without them. Not only are they the closest family I have - they are all also my closest friends.

I had a lunch opportunity and booked in my daughter Brooke to put a line through her work from home schedule and meet me nearby at Gregory Hills. The new HUB is the most aptly named building in our district - but I think the HUB was supposed to refer to business - not necessarily dining. With five exciting restaurants to choose from, it's also a dining hub. The variety on offer is brilliant too.

From the moment you arrive on the ground level of The HUB, there is a vibe. A vibe that multiple cafe/bar/restaurants bring. Punters move around excited by the options - business people move around - because remember, it's supposed to be a business hub.

Brooke sent me a message in the morning. "Where are we going?" I hadn't really decided one hundred percent, but I suggested Nuriyah. "Fantastic, that was top of my list." We had both been impressed by their Instagram presence and were keen to indulge.

We entered Nuriyah post-covid style. After check-ins and vaccination confirmations, we selected a table near the junction of the

inside/outside restaurant. The staff were scurrying around and we weren't immediately attended to, but we cared little. We were gushing over Brooke's daughter Rosie, my very first grandchild. 3.5 now, she's smart and sassy - but also wonderfully affectionate.

Our order was taken and we got back to chatter. The food did take a while to arrive and we were updated with a number of apologies. We assured the lovely young ladies that we were not in a hurry. "Don't stress." When the food was delivered by, who I think was the manager, she apologised again and told us that they were understaffed and the day had been very stressful. "I'm almost in tears," she confided. We reassured her that we had no problem at all. "The food looks spectacular, so all is good."

The food was spectacular too. "Just like it looked on Instagram". Actually we agreed that the menu offers so much enticement that ordering was quite difficult. In the end Brooke went for a Pulled Lamb Salad and I opted for a Kafta Bowl. Yes the food is based in Lebanon. Both our meals were excellent and I cannot wait to try a few of the seductive dishes I spied on the menu. The mere thought of Knafeh French Toast has me booking a table.

I mentioned the stress levels on staff to make a point. Restaurants are reopening understaffed because they can't get staff - not through stinginess. On top of that, most of the staff are freshly employed and still learning. PLEASE be patient and kind.