



Good experience

Susan Preston returns to an old favourite.

For vibrant atmosphere and excellent food you will not find anywhere better than Bar 166 and Bistro in Horsforth.

This is a favourite Northside eating and drinking haunt and it has certainly lost none of its appeal since being opened back in December 2004 as a first time project for owner Matthew Jones. Matthew has since gone on to open bar sixtytwo at 62 Town Street, Horsforth, and has just recently taken over The Fairfax Arms in Gilling East near York which provides food and accommodation.

On our latest visit to Bar 166 and Bistro the bar and bistro were packed. True, it was a Friday evening and you would almost expect this as the weekend action kicks off, but we have never seen this place anything other than bustling.

The food, as ever, was great. As simple folk we like the straightforward pricing here: starters are £5.50, main courses are £12, side orders £2, and desserts are £5. There are a few exceptions to this rule; locally sourced Dales steak, for example, costs from £10 (8oz rump) to £18 (6oz fillet), and soup and crusty bread is £5.

We chose the chicken liver parfait with red onion marmalade and toasted brioche, and crab linguini

infused with chilli and ginger, coriander and pine nut pesto as our starters. The linguini had a real bite to it and was very flavoursome. The chicken liver parfait was equally enjoyed across the table.

I opted for the special's board offering of grilled seabass, oriental stir fry and shellfish bisque for my main course. This was well cooked and provided a good fusion of flavours. My dining partner chose the smoked haddock with his favourite of black pudding and also mashed potato, poached egg and grain mustard veloute; this also got the thumbs up. Our side dish choices of homemade skin-on chips and carrot and swede puree were tasty and welcome accompaniments.

I was the only one with room left for dessert and went for the white chocolate and strawberry cheesecake. This was delicious and certainly to be recommended – you could tell it was homemade.

We have dined here many times now and we have never had anything but a good experience. They keep the menu relatively simple, but it works and you always know the food is going to be cooked and presented well.

Bar 166 and Bistro never fails to deliver and is well worth a visit. If you are over York way you should pop in at The Fairfax Arms; Matthew promises the food is as good here. We'll have to try it out soon.

Bar 166 and Bistro serves lunch and dinner seven days a week, 12 noon until 3pm and 6pm until close. The bar is open all day from 12 noon.

WHAT WE ATE:

Starters:

Chicken liver parfait, £5.50
Crab linguini, £5.50

Mains:

Smoked haddock, £12
Grilled seabass, £12

Sides:

Carrot and swede puree, £2
Homemade skin on chips, £2

Dessert:

White chocolate and strawberry cheesecake, £5

Drinks:

Cabernet Sauvignon, £4.70 per glass
Baileys Liqueur Coffee, £4
Irish Coffee, £4

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Tel: 0113 258 2661
www.bar166.co.uk

Northside verdict:

"A vibrant and busy bistro serving simple, straightforward food that delivers time after time."