

## Pilu at Freshwater

Three former Tamworth Circuiteers and their wives took a favourite attorney from that city and his wife to lunch to celebrate his 50th. There was some early nostalgia for fortnights when we rendered fees equivalent to a BAS quarter these days. Nor is the legal profession the only sad group. The annual two or three million dollar boost to the Tamworth economy is much mourned by those who sell tractors and other farm equipment amongst others.

But Pilu at Freshwater dispelled any gloom. Set in the old kiosk building, it is spacious and airy and takes wonderful advantage of wall to wall windows overlooking the beach. The building, although tarted up, is structurally unchanged except for the superb new kitchen.

One of our party was Sue Jenkins of Accoutrement and Giovanni Pilu made quite a fuss of us accordingly. Eight sardine fillets, marinated in olive oil with fresh capers appeared from nowhere, one each and quite delicious.

Attentive waitfolk brought drinks, outlined the specials and said, 'Only three rosti Porci left'.

'We'll have them', was the chorus.

Annette doesn't like pork and I've had it twice before so we let the rest fight it out, which they did amicably enough.

Entrees included a boned and stuffed quail, crisply cooked and pronounced, 'The best quail I've had ever eaten'.

But he wouldn't share so I can't tell you what was in the stuffing. There was nothing left on the plate.

Another highlight was Ensalata Tomate, a special made with sliced, large Black Russian tomatoes and other tiny tomatoes with Buffalo mozzarella and a light dressing of basil and garlic with decorative greens. I had not had the Black Russian tomatoes before and enjoyed the new experience.

The three who had the pork loved the slow cooked suckling pig with very special juicy crackling. Other mains included grilled swordfish, thickly cut and fresh with mash and greens. It was a bit dry for me, I thought.

Annette and I shared the Zuppa del Pescatore, a melange of crab, mussels, prawns, calamari and fish fillets in a tomato, garlic, fresh herbs and white wine broth. It was plenty for two and blew us away. It came with Sardinian crisp and thin bread called Carte de Musica.

We drank Sardinian beer and wine, both white and red, which were all very acceptable.

Sweets included pannacotta with a special honey based sauce and a shared meringue based dessert whose name I forget. The pace was slow which suited us as Sunday afternoon 12.45 until four or so with that view and attentive service drifted to its happy conclusion.

**Pilu at Freshwater**  
 Moore Road  
 Harbord  
 Ph: (02) 9938 3331  
 All major cards accepted



## The Cove Seafood Brasserie

Another eatery that takes full advantage of a great site is The Cove Brasserie on Manly wharf. It is spacious and bright with superb views of the harbour side of Manly, enlivened by parasailers, the ferries and small craft.

I have eaten there two of three times and enjoyed the standard menu, oysters, seafood crepes and very fresh fish, but as I went by this week I was drawn by the specials menu to try again. I rounded up my daughter (by a former party of the second part) and her party of the second part and we went for lunch.

I had a window table and a James Boag's in my hand before the young ones had finished parking the car! Whilst the three of us read the menu, warm Italian rolls and wine by the glass were delivered (Redwood Marlborough sauvignon blanc and Oak Ridge pinot from an excellent wine list, the Pinot opened for one glass although not listed as by the glass. Very good.)

Then to the specials: we shared a duck, apple and thyme sausage, served with saffron mash and orange/ginger marmalade. This was novel, tasty and we were all keen to have the last bit!

Next we tried the fettucine tossed with fresh beetroot, asparagus and goat's cheese in virgin olive oil. Again creative and very good.

My son-in-law had the seared lamb back strap filet with sauteed red cabbage and mint infused yoghurt, which he devoured happily.

I had and shared the snapper pie, baked with potatoes and winter vegetables – carrot, peas and parsnip – topped with puff pastry. Delicious and very filling. It was reminiscent of the Boathouse pie, but quite different. Truly, it would feed two or even three and was still hot after 15 minutes.

The last indulgence was a shared flourless chocolate and walnut slice with raspberry coulis and double cream. Lighter than expected and plenty for three. Coffee washed it down.

I think this is cooking of the finest order. Ride the ferry over and give it a try.

**The Cove Seafood Brasserie**  
 210 Manly Wharf  
 Manly  
 Ph: (02) 976 2400.  
 All major cards accepted.