

Magill Estate Review Sept 2013

Recently A.B dined at the “New” Penfolds Magill Estate Restaurant. It has been over two years since we dined here last and needless to say we were looking forward to seeing what has been happening for the last 24 months whilst it has been “Closed for Renovations”

We secured a table for two on the first Saturday night after the Wednesday August 28th official opening.

The first thing that is immediately noticeable on arrival is a distinctly different feel when compared to the “old” Magill Estate. Gone is the cold and clinical feel and there is a warmth and cosiness that has replaced it.

More soft furnishings in neutral colours, wooden tables without tablecloths and even a red neon light deliver an atmosphere that is far more inviting in comparison to what it has replaced. It does have a more casual feel but yet is still intimate and there are carefully crafted “booth” type seats and curved tables that mean no-one misses out on the view. Tables for two are arranged such that guests are seated more closely rather than opposite each other and the use of some innovative glass-art-come lighting was arranged such that each table has its own source of light from above rather than the whole restaurant getting bathed in light as it was some years ago.

I have to say that there was no evidence of any major works...certainly nothing that should have taken 2 years to complete. It only looked like an internal makeover, but more serious works may have been carried out in the kitchen area which was not seen.

There were still some familiar faces on senior staff and the waiting staff seemed more relaxed, friendly and knowledgeable than our last visit.

We chose to have the 5 course degustation with matched wine. This resulted in a dinner for two just surpassing the \$500 mark.

Without spoiling the menu for some of you and detailing every dish... it was a little hit and miss in my book.

The “snacks” that came out first failed to hit the mark and were not as “moreish” as one would expect. They were also quite difficult to eat as one of

the components was what could be likened to a very fragile prawn cracker but with only a very delicate taste.

Our favourites were the Marron dish and a beautiful Wagyu dish. Both hit the mark entirely due to the quality of the produce used. The Marron used a large piece of meat that was sweet, firm and tasty. The Wagyu was served on the rare side of Medium rare and was smooth, tender and had that beautiful Wagyu juiciness. The servings were typically small and had some creative accompaniments that worked in some cases and were almost a waste of time with others. Wines were matched perfectly as one would expect and they included some 10 year old reds from Penfolds premium range as well as some interesting varieties such as a sweet and fruity Traminer.

A Hay infused... (yes Hay as in what Horses eat) ice-cream was an unusual and pleasant surprise and we also were treated to try a superb soufflé that was an absolute cracker as well.

All in all. It was a good experience. Not mind-blowing-ly amazing but very good. In our opinion, there are better degustations available and at a lower price - Hentley farm would be one of these.

The decor is more inviting, the view fantastic, the service great and the food very good.

Keen to come back again in 6 months and see what has changed or been refined.

A.B