

Singapore fling

Saucy puns are dished up all day at this sexy restaurant, writes Rachael Oakes-Ash

singapore CREATING a sexy dining experience takes courage. Go too far with the leather and chains and you'll end up looking like a Madame Lash dungeon.

Desire restaurant at Singapore's Scarlet Hotel has got it right.

The hotel is known for its seductive hues of rouge, textured interiors, candelabras and mood lighting.

It is filled with contemporary business types and cashed-up wannabe femmes fatales in town for some serious shopping.

The restaurant Desire is all about food as sensory foreplay.

Ceilings are high. Curtains are white and sheer with black brocade drapes. Chairs are tall in blackwood, leather and hot pink velour. Plates are red and white. Waiting staff are young, buffed and perky.

We're here for the "quickie" lunch, three courses with coffee.

At Desire it's de rigeur to openly discuss the menu, which comes bound in leather and rope, and be voyeuristic by staring at another's plate. When appetisers are named Romp in the Hay, Silk Stockings and Getting Fresh, it would be rude not to.

Eros is the god of lust, but at Desire restaurant it's oriental tossed beef with crisp vegetables in a sesame soya dressing.

I choose Slow and Sensuous, a plate of cream of escargot drizzled with truffle oil.

It's all bodice ripper and saucy minx at Desire and the emphasis on double entendre at times makes me feel I am in a *Carry On* movie for a bit of slap and tickle.

Sure, the setting is boudoir chic, but all this sex talk takes the emphasis off the food and at times it begins to feel like a themed restaurant rather than fine dining with humour.

Cod in the Act no doubt cost the owners of the Scarlet, Grace International, a fortune in creative thinktank fees, but it's still cod on a plate come main course.

Sensual Bliss lives up to its name with tender lamb rack (no pun intended) laid (no pun intended again) on a bed (again) of vanilla-scented potato.

Come for dinner and be tempted by Beefcake, In the Mood, Tickle Your Fancy and a plethora of phrases designed to make nuns blush and the promiscuous play footsies under the table. (Footsies is also the name of a dish).

Food and sex have been intrinsically linked for centuries. Chocolate was banned from monasteries for its aphrodisiac qualities, and if you believe what they say about oysters, then swallow one and explore both your masculine and feminine sides.



Eat-in or love-in: the Scarlet Hotel is the home of Desire, the sexy restaurant with a suggestive menu.



Glamorous: the hotel facade.



Welcome: the luxurious lobby.



Cuddle up: a comfy couch.

At dessert, The Lady of the Night feels an appropriate choice, and I tuck into baked peach tart with calvados sauce.

My dining colleague's Pleasure Principle of white chocolate bavarois, passionfruit emulsion and mixed berries is too tempting and, before I know it, I have devoured it as well.

The lunch finishes with the predictable "coffee, tea or me" from our waiter.

Desire is not for the first date. The three-month anniversary would be perfect, and book a suite upstairs. But be warned, prudes need not apply.

traveller's checks

Where: Scarlet Hotel, Erskine St, Singapore

Getting there: Singapore Airlines flies from Melbourne direct to Singapore daily

www.singaporeairlines.com.au

Bookings: www.luxehotels.com



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As at 29/03/06

Source: www.rba.gov.au

travelweather

Tokyo

Today: 2-12C and partly cloudy. March mean temp. 5.2-12.9C; mean March total rainfall 114.5mm; mean number of rainy days in March, 9.2. Spring has almost sprung in Tokyo where an employee of Japan's Meteorological Agency is on watch for the first cherry blossom of the year. Great importance is placed on accurately forecasting the arrival of the "cherry blossom front" which dictates the start of the season and associated festivities.

Source: Lonely Planet and www.worldweather.org

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