

CITY TAVERN

Address: 10 Northumberland Rd,
Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8JF

Phone: 0191 232 1308

Disabled access: yes

Food is served from Monday to
Sunday 10am until 8.30pm.

Food: ★★★★★
 Service: ★★★★★
 Ambience: ★★★★★
 Overall: ★★★★★

Tavern lives up to the hype

IT'S a couple of years since this city centre pub was taken over and given a major refurbishment in terms of decor and menus.

Since then, the City Tavern has won award after award. So, with a group of friends, we decided to see if it lived up to all the hype.

We were there on a Sunday and the city was crammed with Christmas shoppers, so we had booked ahead.

It's safe to say the exterior of the pub is plain but once you step through the front door you find a really welcoming interior.

The pub is over two floors and you can dine and drink on both levels.

The wooden tables and chairs are far enough apart to afford some privacy while exposed brick walls, contrasting with huge chandeliers, are an effective backdrop for unusual pictures and icons.

The City Tavern has both a homely feel and a contemporary coolness.

We picked one of the distinctive snugs next to the bar and found out about the history.

Apparently the building was built in 1872 as stables. Over the years it was a garage and office accommodation. It finally became a pub in 1971, since then it has undergone several name and style changes, until nearly two years ago it was transformed into the venue it is today.

But enough of the surroundings. What about the food?

Starter options ranged from seared Scottish King scallops to braised gammon and pistachio terrine.

Because we liked the look of the dessert menu, we chose to skip the starters, however.



FOOD REVIEW
By Angela Upex

Locally sourced ingredients form the backbone of the no-nonsense menus, with the main menu offering (main courses from £7) currently boasting a hearty steak and ale pie, award-winning Northumberland pork and leek sausages with creamed tatties, and warming lemon and thyme pot roast chicken.

We were told we could pick our lunch from the regular menu or the festive menu.

We ordered a few drinks and noted that there was an eclectic choice of well-kept beers. The bar offers 10 cask ales and ciders and also has three house ales, brewed exclusively.

From the festive menu, I opted for the roast turkey breast wrapped in ham (£12.95), with all the trimmings new potatoes, rare breed

pork and sage stuffing, roasted root vegetables, braised red cabbage, brussel sprouts with chestnuts.

A huge slice of meat, cooked beautifully and flavoursome, was piled on a mountain of veg, while the root vegetables were delicious.

It was a huge dish of comfort food, cooked well, all very hearty and satisfying.

Across the table, our vegetarian guest sampled the wild mushroom wellington (£12.95) served with shallot mash, buttered greens and thyme gravy. He loved it. His favourite expression is 'leaf eaters don't want rabbit food' and the wellington was gutsy, the pastry perfect and his gravy perfect.

Another guest had the three bean chilli (£7.95) served with coleslaw, salad leaves and cornbread. It was a hearty chilli with the right amount of kick without having to gulp down gallons of water. It was topped with soured cream.

After a lengthy pause, two puddings and a large cheesecake (£8.95) were ordered.

We enjoyed stilton, Wensleydale with apricot and cheddar with nettle which was our favourite cheese with its delicate lasting flavour.

This was served with oatcakes, butter, grapes, celery and winter fruit chutney and smoke bacon jam.

The gooey flourless chocolate brownie (£5.95) was served with Beckleberry's vanilla ice cream. Perfectly sublime was the verdict.

And one of my guests tried the Christmas pudding (£5.95). Not the biggest affair admittedly but it tasted wonderful.

When you've had enough of Northumberland Street you can retire to the City Tavern for comfort food, which under the auspices of the team which heavily rely on fresh and home-made dishes.

A relaxed ambience, friendly staff (we were looked after by John and his service was faultless) and pleasant surroundings only add to the overall enjoyment. A great pub which really deserves all its awards.

What we ate:



■ Cheesboard



■ Chilli



■ Roast Turkey



■ Mushroom Wellington



■ Christmas Pud

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