

Dinner at the Abbey Lodge in Celbridge

DINNING OUT.....with Kim Mullahey

Perhaps better known as McNamee's at the bridge in Celbridge, The Abbey Lodge serves good food and plenty of it.

Admittedly, the first floor restaurant had been long overlooked on the dining out roster but with oversight has been corrected and with Lunch still on the menu, a repeat visit will definitely be made in the much nearer future.

This is a little gem of a place, and the Saturday night quiet is a good indication that it has been definitely overlooked.

The Italianate, baroque-style entrance is juxtaposed to the rustic, rough-hewn stone-lined dining area at the rear, but the two rooms are separate enough to make the whole place work.

Attention to detail is immediately apparent here. It begins with the lift, making it accessible for push chairs and wheelchairs, and continues with table settings complete with linen napkins yet somehow it is not the least bit pretentious; there is good food and plenty of it.

The sweet, nutty flavour of young Brie cheese, breaded and deep-fried was complimented by mildly sweet Thai chilli dressing and served with plenty of fresh mixed greens, and there was plenty of everything in the salad including a presentation topped off by a ripe cherry tomato.

There was no rush between courses, the main course of an eight-ounce steak sandwich with plenty of sautéed onions and side salad and a plentiful portion of floury chips served in good time enough to relax in a deep and comfortable chair before a roaring fire.

The strip steak was thick enough to stand up to a medium-rare request, the lean meat with little marbling served in a thick French bread roll which had been flavoured by the natural meat juices. All at the end was just enough room for a really good coffee.

The place is child-friendly until 9pm, and wait staff were as attentive to families as to a lone diner enjoying the fire and a good book.

There is plenty on the menu at The Abbey Lodge including a range of steaks, chicken dishes and fajitas. The price is reasonable and the food is great.

COST ****

AMBIANCE****

SERVICE*****

FOOS QUALITY****

OVERALL RATING ****