

# Restaurant Review

Finding the best places to eat In & Around Shropshire



*Merlots*  
 Grays Hotel & Conference Centre  
 Foregate, Telford Town Centre  
 Telford TF3 4NA  
 T: 01952 425 000

The Grays Hotel and Conference Centre is located at the heart of Telford just a couple of minutes walk from the town centre. The hotel is a part of the Southwater Event Group, which a family owned business. Merlots Restaurant is situated within the hotel and is open to the public everyday for breakfasts, lunches and evening meals.

We visited Merlots restaurant on a Thursday evening and were greeted with a warm welcome from the restaurant's front of house staff. There is a lovely bar area with lots of comfy seats where you can have a relaxing drink before or after your meal but we decided to go straight through to the restaurant. The dining room was impeccably kept with large well-spaced candlelit tables; there are large windows to the one side, which overlook a lovely courtyard area.

Service was very prompt and we were given some freshly baked poppy seeded bread rolls to enjoy while we looked over the menu. As well as the A La Carte menu there is also the Table d'hôte Menu that

changes daily so there is a great variety of dishes to choose from. The Table d'hôte menu offers a choice of courses at a set price of £11.20 for one course, £15.95 for 2 courses or £18.95 for 3 courses.

For starters Fleur chose the Goat's Cheese En Croute topped with red onion marmalade and finished with a Balsamic Reduction, which she said had a delicious mix of flavours and textures.

I had ordered the Sautéed King Prawns placed on a Rocket and Parmesan Salad, finished with lemon oil - the large juicy prawns were perfect with the fresh rocket and the lemon oil added a lovely zing.



The main course dishes were quickly served and I had selected the Fillet of Chicken, filled with goats cheese



and wrapped in bacon - the chicken fillet was large and succulent and the melting goats cheese added a nice subtle cheese flavour, it was all kept nice and moist by the bacon wrapped around it, the chicken was served on a layer of crushed buttery new potatoes with sticks of carrot and a deliciously smooth creamy mushroom sauce.

Fleur had opted for the Braised Lamb Shank with a duo of mash served with fresh broccoli finished with a rosemary and mint jus - the

presentation was very impressive with the lamb shank trimmed and presented like a work of art, Fleur said "the lamb was lovely and tender and fell away from the bone and both the mashed potato and mashed carrots were smooth and creamy", she was delighted with her choice.

We had a short rest while we waited for our desserts as mine took about 20 minutes to prepare. Homemade Chocolate Fondant was my choice - a must for chocolate lovers and well worth the wait! I pulled open the soft fondant case with my spoon and fork and the warm chocolaty inner slowly oozed out, it came with a scoop of vanilla ice cream,



which was served in a delicate milk chocolate basket, again the food and presentation was faultless.

Fleur had ordered the homemade Tiramisu, which was a very generous portion, layers of soft sponge filled with cream and accompanied with large fresh strawberry.

To finish the evening we both enjoyed a cappuccino with some chocolates and a selection of biscuits.

The quality and presentation of all the dishes was fantastic and the staff were friendly and helpful throughout our stay.

There are a variety of dishes to choose from to suit most tastes; the most popular dish is the Poached Salmon with a lemon, spring onion and pea risotto. If you have any special dietary needs then they can cater for most of them, but it is always best to let them know in advance when you are booking.

A bar menu is available daily between 10am - 10pm and the evening menus are available between 7 - 10pm. On a Tuesday evening there is an all you can eat Italian buffet at £10.25 per person. If you prefer something spicier then

try the Curry night on a Wednesday evening at just £8.25 per person.

Full English breakfasts are available from 7am-10am Monday to Friday and 8am-10am Saturday to Sunday for £11 with a choice of hot and cold food, which you can help yourself to as much as you want.

Afternoon teas for two are just £12.95 per couple.

The hotel has 90 bedrooms and 19 conference rooms and can cater for up to 120 people, so they can cater for most occasions, from business meetings to weddings. The hotel also boasts superb leisure facilities that include a fully equipped gym, swimming pool and sauna. There is plenty of free car parking available.

Whether you are celebrating a special occasion, a night out with friends or even a weekend break you won't be disappointed with the quality food, excellent service the friendly staff.

If you book a table during March you will receive a FREE dessert when you purchase a starter and a main course - please mention "In and Around Magazine" when making your reservation.

Reviewed by Nik & Fleur Abel

*Merlots*  
 Restaurant & Bar

Table d'hôte & A La Carte  
 Menus available

Bar menu available daily  
 Special Nights including:  
 Tuesday - Italian Buffet  
 Wednesday - Curry Night

Mothers Day menu available  
 £15.50

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 visit: [www.southwatereventgroup.com](http://www.southwatereventgroup.com)

Tel: 01952 425 000



*Opening Times*

Bar  
*Opening Times*

Monday - Friday  
 10am - 10pm

Saturday - Sunday  
 10am - 10pm

*Restaurant*  
*Opening Times*

Monday - Friday  
 7pm - 10pm

Saturday - Sunday  
 7pm - 10pm

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