

The Royal Budha

Guest experiences...& Media Reviews

Mr. Stuart March 2009

Food was brilliant...I really mean this...we had three appetizers and two main dishes and the flavor, freshness of product, spicy, presentation, authenticity was amazing...THIS has to be a selling point...the authenticity of this Thai food...not bastardised Thai like Lemongrass etc..The chefs were so friendly and very proud of food...

- The Thai Beef Salad & Beef & basil were easily some of the best we have tried
- Love the rice presentation in the basket
- Thai chai tea nice touch at start as was prawn crackers and savory jam
- Menu selection good mix and some very enticing options

The Royal Budha

Take a trip out of town for tasty Thai food in Al Barsha's Holiday Inn

I hail from the Unites States. So does Holiday Inn. That doesn't mean that I feel some kind of bond with the charmless hotel chain, or that I feel any patriotic compulsion to eat in one. It seems my co-workers felt even less compelled, as finding one to join me for dinner at the newly opened Holiday Inn Al Barsha's Thai restaurant was proving to be a difficult task. I had them (scared) at 'Holi-'.

- Thankfully, one of my friends event-uually took pity on me, and together we set out for Royal Budha. When we arrived, we found an oddly swishy, crimson-clad room, centred around a giant golden Buddha. The soundtrack was jazz-trance fusion, more appropriate for a place like Buddha Bar than a cosy restaurant with no dancefloor.
- Just as the decor was fancier than what I'd expect from a Holiday Inn outlet, the menu, too, was a bit pricier. But then the quality of the food also surpassed our expectations. The beef salad, a Thai standard, was juicier than the norm, and had enough spice to give it kick, but not too much to overwhelm the palate. The equally traditional Thai summer rolls (shrimp, cabbage and coriander wrapped in rice paper) made for a fresh, enlivening opener. These tasty offerings made it clear that Royal Budha wasn't trying to trick out the wheel, just serve up good-quality, Thai standards.
- Shrimp in an order of green curry were so monstrously large that we wondered if they had been taking steroids on the sly.

Normally, big prawns equal tough chews, but these succulent beasts positively wilted in the mouth. My order of hor muok pla, or fish steamed in a banana leaf, struck up a bit of controversy at the table. It was moist to the point of soggy, and coated in Thai herbs. I enjoyed the flavour, which bore a resemblance to tea leaves, but my date found it off-putting.

- Desserts were also fairly classic, but excellent regardless. I was amazed that an order of caramelised bananas could be so light. Meanwhile, my date's order of sticky rice and mango was as sweet and fresh as one could hope for (there was also the option to order durian – the notoriously foul smelling, yet sweet tasting south east Asian fruit, but we opted to take a pass).
- Throughout all this, the waiting staff were exceptionally polite, speaking in strangely hushed tones and demonstrating cat-like reflexes throughout our meal. Once, after dropping a chopstick, I asked our waiter if I could get a new one. I hadn't yet finished the sentence before a fresh pair stealthily appeared next to my plate. Bellies full and preconceptions challenged, we surveyed the room. It would seem that not all of Dubai shared our snobbishness – the restaurant was respectably full. It's nice to see a low-key restaurant such as this pull in customers for its value and the good quality of its food, and not simply because it's simply some five-star hotel's glitzy new jewel.

From Time Out Dubai Eating Out 2010

It's difficult to muster much excitement for a restaurant situated in the Holiday Inn. The hotel chain is hardly known for its culinary prowess. That said, Royal Buddha is a surprisingly good Thai restaurant. The room is oddly upscale, as are the prices. Expect lots of crimson and a giant Buddha set against a soundtrack of jazz-trance fusion. It's an environment more appropriate for a place like Buddha Bar than a cosy restaurant with no dancefloor. Still, Royal Buddha serves up Thai standards with aplomb (most of the time). The beef salad is juicier than the norm, and has enough spice to give it kick, but not too much to overwhelm the palate. Prawns in an order of green curry are so monstrously large that you might wonder if they've been taking steroids on the sly. The texture, though, is positively wilting. Worth a visit if you're headed to Al Barsha anyway.

The Royal Buddha at Holiday Inn Al Barsha

Creative cuisine delivered in a stylish setting under the watchful eye of a towering Buddha makes this a royal treat. Situated on the ground floor, this contemporary Thai restaurant is the per **The Budha watches over**

The Royal Budha in Dubai

August 07, 2009

The first thing you will notice at The Royal Budha, Holiday Inn Dubai, Al Barsha, is the unusually long and heavy cutlery they use. I could not help but ask Gaurish Vernekar, the restaurant's assistant manager, whether we would be served food in tall glasses as well. "No," he said with a smile. "These are actually multipurpose implements." Fork, knife and spoon on one end, chopsticks on the other — the choice was ours. However, wooden chopsticks are also provided. The stylish restaurant, decked in dark red and black, promises to serve "authentic Thai fare with a twist, under the watchful gaze of a gleaming giant Budha". Well spaced out tables, dark furniture and soft lighting give diners a sense of privacy and create a cosy, romantic ambience. While you tip shot glasses of pandan juice, check out the extensive menu that offers traditional appetisers and fiery curries, including specialities such as hor muok pla, or steamed fish with vegetables and herbs wrapped in banana leaves, and pad woon sen talay, or wok-fried glass noodles with seafood. The dessert menu, too, consists of Thai avourites such as fried banana and sago seeds with melon and coconut milk. And if you feel the menu is overwhelming, choose one of the healthy Powwer Eat set menus for Dh70 and Dh135 each.

The staff is friendly and the service impeccable — what else does one need? A tasty meal served with a smile, to take away the weariness of a long day or to put you at ease on a weekend evening.

Overview

Design: Modern, elegant and comfortable



Cuisine: Traditional Thai

Royal Buddha at a glance

Reviewed by Yasmin Helal

December 2010

After five years in Dubai, I started to get tired of Chinese food cooked by Philipino chefs, Iranian food cooked by Indian chefs and Italian food cooked by Arabs.

My expectations were not very high as I entered the Royal Buddha restaurant at Holiday Inn located in Barsha. I was pleased to know that their top notch Thai cuisine was delicately perfected by Thai chefs.

The lighting was dim, the music was authentic Asian and the center of the restaurant was marked by a large statue of Buddha. I was left breathless by my spicy king prawns which came along with Jasmine rice.

Royal Buddha is a perfect meeting point for business appointments, relaxing with friends or even for a date. In fact, it is especially suitable for an extra romantic date.

You would think this amazing food, friendly service and an ever so relaxing ambiance would cost you a fortune. Think again. The average three course meal ranges anything between AED 100 and AED 200.

In addition, they provide special offers such as Set Menu Fit for a Princess, costing AED 225, Set Menu Fit for a Queen, costing 275, and Set Menu Fit for a King, costing AED 325. All of which contain appetizers, main course and dessert for two.

Royal Buddha is definitely a restaurant that serves all of your senses along with your stomach.



Oriental spice ride

By Anand Raj

March 4, 2009

When I think of Thailand, one of the first things that comes to mind is hospitality. I have visited the picturesque country quite a few times and have been bowled over by the cuisine and culture. So it was no surprise to find similar sentiments echoed at The Royal Buddha. The staff were eager and friendly, and the soft-lit interiors comfortable and understated. The decor and cutlery showed touches of Far East culture, while a looming gilt-coated statue in one section of the restaurant completed the Thai look.

As soon as we had settled in our seats, we were served a complimentary plate of rice crisps and thimble-sized glasses of what tasted like very agreeable ginger ale. I sipped this while perusing the menu before ordering a Raspberry Daiquiri mocktail. For starters, we chose Gai Reo Nuao Satay (chicken satay) and Hoi Cho (deep fried chicken

and crabmeat wrapped in bean curd skin). The chicken satay was a trifle dry but the crab meat rolls were out of this world.

I truly relished the seafood starter, which came in slightly larger than bite-sized rolls. Moist and perfectly done, the tender crab and chicken meat was delightfully flavourful. I was busy tucking into the last of the rolls when the ebullient chef stopped by our table.

Pleasantries over, I asked him what the specialty of the house was. "We have an interesting menu, but tell me, what is your choice of meat?" he queried, throwing the ball back into my court. "I would like to sample duck," I said. "OK," said the chef. "I shall make a special dish. I shall stir fry duck with ginger juliennes and some sauces."

My friend opted for wok-fried prawns with garlic sauce and wok-fried noodles with seafood. The former came with sticky jasmine rice – a Thai staple.

The stir-fried strips of duck were well-coated with soy and oyster sauces and presented almost covered in a net of ginger juliennes. It was delicious.

So was the noodle dish. Served with mid-size prawns and assorted veggies, it made a scrumptious meal. "In case you want to make it spicier, you can use the chilli powder," suggested the waiter, pointing to the tablespoonful of fiery red powder lying in one corner of the plate. Of course, I didn't use it. Sometimes you must leave good alone.

However, I could not resist extending my chopsticks to nab one of the large wok-fried prawns and wow, it was easily one of the finest prawn dishes I've tasted in a long time. Tossed with garlic sauce, the succulent prawns were cooked to just the right doneness.

I half closed my eyes relishing the flavours of the prawn – a wrong thing to do when with friends who love seafood because when I opened my eyes, the prawns were gone! "Nice one, that dish," my friend said, dabbing the corners of his mouth with the napkin.

"Dessert sir?" asked the waiter. Yes, I said, opting for fried bananas with honey – perhaps a wrong choice because I found the bananas a bit too squishy for my liking.

But on the whole, The Royal Budha offered us a lovely dining experience. I'd return if only to sample the prawns and the crab meat rolls again.



What you would expect from Holiday Inn, nothing more or less."

Holiday Inn Dubai-AI Barsha

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Pattaya, Thailand

May 11, 2010 | Trip type: Solo travel

Being a resident of Dubai for the past 2 years I stayed in this hotel for a couple of nights whilst in the process of relocating.

Basically you get what you expect from the Holiday Inn brand from this hotel, a consistent level of service.

I picked this hotel due to it's location being next door to the Mall of the Emirates and the Metro station, plus you get easy access to Sheik Zayed Road for your travels if you drive around

Dubai.

The hotel has several bars including a sports bar which offers extended happy hours throughout the week as well as a plethora of ladies of the night if that's your thing!

The hotel is also additional guest friendly should you visit the sports bar or other venues in Dubai.

Restaurants choice was reasonable and included **very good Thai and Indian restaurants**