

What's
Food & drink



● Pan-fried seabass fillet on roasted vegetables with a red pepper coulis, seared scallops and olive oil new potatoes.

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Sleek and Silky-smooth

Tantalise your tastebuds with Gatsby-esque ambience

BOTTLES of Moët and Laurent-Perrier guard the sleek black bar, a white glossy piano sits to the side of a grand dining room and above me glows a glistening chandelier.

In front of me stands Nebuchadnezzar – tall and strong, with a golden, regal finish. No, I'm not talking about the most powerful king of ancient Babylon but a 15-litre bottle of Moët, equivalent to 120 glasses or 20 standard bottles of champagne.

With this being just one of the bottles decadently decorating the restaurant entrance, Silks Bistro and Champagne Bar immediately sets the precedent you are fine-dining.

Hidden within the Atlantic Hotel in Newquay, the modest exterior nowhere near reflects the divine interior of mirrored walls, black leather sofas and regal silver and black curtains.

Having lived in Newquay for the majority of my life, I seem to have

overlooked one of the tourist town's most exquisite dining spots. Tantalising the tastebuds of diners for about 12 years and recently awarded an AA rosette, Silks is being singled out as a restaurant which deserves recognition for its excellent quality of food and unbelievably efficient service.

The décor is lavish and sophisticated – we're talking black granite tables and zebra-print chairs – the undeniably noticeable display of champagne bottles hints at a Gatsby-esque ambience and the food is equally as satisfying.

The starter of roasted hake, new potato salad and pea shoots in a lemon dressing (£6) is stunning. A meaty piece of fish with a refreshing zing of lemon and a light potato salad stack that falls graciously from the fork is a taste

sensation. The dish is from their specials menu and is worth trying but for something a bit more robust, go for the Newlyn crab cakes (£7.50).

The two chunky crab cakes, fluffy in the centre with a crispy breadcrumb coating, on a bed of lemon and sweet chilli mayonnaise, had me edging towards a full stomach before I had even looked at my main course.

There is certainly no scrimping when it comes to food as portions are generous and the combination of flavours is extraordinary.

For my main, I was in food heaven when I eagerly tucked into a hearty dish of slow-braised lamb shank (£15.95). Delicately falling off the bone into a rich braising jus, it was accompanied by a side of punchy wholegrain mustard mash, tender-stem broccoli and sticky red cabbage – the kind you'd have on Christmas day – sweet, rich in flavour

and fruity undertones. I didn't know if I'd be able to finish the generous portion, scattered with handmade parsnip crisps but that thought was immediately abolished as each bite of lamb melted in my mouth and left me lingering for more. My date chose the trio of pork loin (£16.75); mushroom rolled pork, braised pork daube and crackling with a butternut squash puree, crushed peas and winter vegetables. Opting for an extra side of new potatoes (£3.50), even these were cooked to perfection, their salty skins bursting with a buttery coating.

Considering quantity of food, two courses is more than enough to have you going home happy but I couldn't resist treating myself to a dessert, cooked by chef Greg Huxford and his team.

Having previously trained in Australia, Greg has been working at Silks for nine

months and with the two courses I had prior to pudding exceeding expectations, I didn't want my fine-dining to end just yet.

A comforting classic, I chose the vanilla rice pudding with crushed meringue and raspberry coulis (£6.95). The creamy combination of textures and sharp bursts of raspberry worked really well but the real show-stopper was the deconstructed cheesecake (£5.95).

Follow a trail of a light lemon cheese and shortbread biscuits around your plate to a raspberry sorbet and nutty crumb, for a taste like no other. Visually, it looks simple but its taste will leave you wishing there was more.

If you're looking for decadent dining, delicious food and attention to detail, Silks will reign on top, every time.

To book (locals receive 10% discount) call 01637 872244 or see atlantichotelnewquay.co.uk

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