

Coombs on cuisine

In the matter of Fish

Of the three Doyles fish restaurants I like the one at the Fish Markets the best. Watson's Bay is a tourist trap with too many tables and ordinary seafood platters. The Quay is better with lovely views but expensive for what it is. At the markets everything is super fresh, well cooked and interesting.

Three of us went recently and shared salt and pepper squid (lovely with beer) octopus in chilli prawn sauce (an Alice Doyle speciality, sweet tender and not too bitey) and an avocado and seafood salad with prawns, an oyster and smoked salmon with a tangy mayonnaise. If you go alone, just have this, it is great for a warm day.

Then we shared whiting fillets, fried with chips. After the entrees, the serve was plenty for three. The fish was very lightly battered, juicy and tender. There were too many chips even for three!

Fisherman's Lager and a glass or two of Montana sauvignon blanc made this a memorable meal.

The Coffs Harbour Whole Snapper which I have had several times is a show stopper. It comes golden crisp and crunchy upright as if swimming on the plate. They also do a seafood crepe which has a mornay of lobster, white fish and an oyster or two wrapped in it. Yum.

Value near home

The South Curl Curl Winter Swimmers, a motley crew of men and women who share a love of cold salt water, meet for lunch every month. Usually eight or so of the group (about 30 in all) turn up.



The venue is the Harbord Beach Hotel (known to the locals as the Harbord Hilton) where everyone has the 'Tradesman's lunch'. To have it you have to pay cash and sit in the public bar not the restaurant areas. The meal is a good meat pie with mash, plenty of peas, good brown gravy with tomato and Worcestershire sauces provided. To that add a schooner of beer of your choice and a mystery trifecta ticket on whatever is the next race anywhere (Dapto Dogs, Albion Park trots, a surprise). The lot for \$6.00.

Doyles Fish Markets Bistro

Sydney Fish Markets
Ph: (02) 9552 4339 (no bookings)
Cards: MasterCard, Visa, Bankcard
No Amex or Diners

Harbord Beach Hotel

Moore Street, Harbord
Ph: (02) 9905 3434
Cards accepted in the restaurant
Tradesman's lunch must be ordered by 12:40

John Coombs QC

