

## Wild Artichoke

Inherent in the name Wild Artichoke is the promise of hearty food that's warmly organic. Eating at Wild Artichoke is eating with a difference.

To find this restaurant, take the turn at the Auto Service building in Lower Union Street, Kingsbridge. The road surface is rough but don't be put off. Drive 50 yards to the T junction below a terrace of houses and turn left for parking outside the Wild Artichoke. There is no ordinary restaurant frontage. It is in the corner. We were greeted like guests at the open roller-shutter door of the old warehouse.

If you go with friends, 6 or 8 is a good number for a table. If you are fewer than that you will join a table with others and interact with them... or not, as you choose. We were seated by chance at a table with an actor on tour and some local people whom we'd met briefly before, so both the food and the company had fun-filled surprises.

The chef will have arranged the table seating and you will be taken to your places. If you haven't yet noticed the decor you may start to pay attention as you settle onto the fur skin that loosely covers your wooden bench. The table is raw wood on sturdy steel legs and is in perfect harmony with the generally rustic decor.

To give an idea of what is to come, menu cards, listing the evening's dishes, hang like posters on a wall. That evening, the starters included vegetable, cheese and fish based dishes and all were brought to our table for us to share:

*Truffles*

*Mixed salad*

*Mixed brochettes*

*Smoked haddock beignet*

*Aubergine*

*Crab sauce*

Each item was beautifully prepared and flavours of recognisable herbs and spices, as well as some less well known ones, made the taste experience unique and delicious. Plates of tender seasonal food are prepared with skilful understanding of the ingredients.

Next, the main course stimulated both the conversation and our palates. Only compliments were heard at our table of eight as we served ourselves from each of these dishes:

*Porchetta (pork) with beans and spinach*

*Roast cauliflower*

*Potato and fennel gratin*

*Fried polenta and parsnips*

*Pigs cheeks*

*Romanesco kale with walnut dressing*

*Squash and blue cheese salad*

The desserts were superb. It's worth keeping that in mind while enjoying the starters and mains. Brought to the table for us to share were:

*Panacotta*

*Tiramisu*

*Pear and chocolate dessert*

The good coffee that followed was poured from a generous pot.

With satisfaction we took in our surroundings - a light white warehouse room. Central to it is a kitchen where dinner is expertly prepared and cooked by the chef in full view as you dine. Throughout the evening (7.30 to 9.30) we were inspired by the cheerful mood, as well as the food, to explore new ways of cooking.

The chef's recipes are for sale. Against a wall, step ladders support planks on which her hard back recipe books are displayed. All in all it was a brilliant evening in the ways that matter. The food, ambiance and company all made it memorable.

Booking in advance is essential and that's when the set price of £35 is paid. The evening's remaining expense is corkage £5, and coffee. Call Wild Artichoke 07427 572592