

The Fat Monkey

Fore Street, Kingsbridge

Fresh flowers on the table enhance a mood that we embrace at The Fat Monkey restaurant.

To start, we have whitebait and delightful little peppers with a dip, and we enjoy the mix of flavours in an uncomplicated presentation as we relax into the Fat Monkey ambiance. A good light Chardonnay accompanies our starters.

We find the service swift not sloppy and as we linger with our wine before the arrival of our main course, we look out on Kingsbridge Fore Street and recognise that the architecture in the town's main street is better seen from this aspect than shoppers get at street level.

From our window the outlook is of Stark's fascinating window display and, next door to it, tasteful gifts in Lazy Sunday. moshulu shoes are next. It's a branch that opened recently. Next to moshulu, we see Healthwise and, with its promise in mind, think we have chosen wisely from the Fat Monkey's menu.

My attention returns to The Fat Monkey restaurant and looking around agree that to dress casually in a smartish way is right. We're seated at a table of natural wood; like other tables, in a range of shapes and sizes, it's pleasant pine. The level of noise from younger people in animated chatter is a lively hum, but never so loud that our conversation is drowned. Lighting from above is subtle and comes from fashionable filament blubs.

Our food is served in a friendly manner. Fish is beautifully cooked and, like the substantial high-rise meat burgers, (beef or chicken) comes with excellent chips. The vegetarian linguine, a dish of asparagus, wild mushroom and pine-nut with fabulous basil also scores highly. Eton Mess is so popular it's off the menu but choosing warm sticky toffee pudding is good – a delicious, comforting desert.

There are many reasons to return. A room divider separates the restaurant from the bar which is furnished with barrels for tables. Stools and sofas create a pleasant conversation corner with a modern mood. Its walls are painted in mute shades of grey and a comic picture of a monkey highlights the Fat Monkey theme with the caption: "Laugh now, One day we'll be in charge!!"

The Fat Monkey formula is just four miles from Thurlestone. Breakfast, lunch and dinner are served every day. We booked a table, but it's a place to drop in as well. Younger diners claim most of the covers and that's good reason for people of all ages to eat here. You'll find it next to the cinema where a flight of stairs takes you to the restaurant on the first floor of the building called 'The Shambles', which hides the church from Fore Street. It's well placed for a pre-cinema meal. Show them your cinema ticket for a 20% discount on dinner.

Basics meals on the menu are priced: steak £17, Fish & chips £14, Linguine (v) £12. Starters are £4 - £10; deserts £4 - £6; and there are specials at the weekend.

For more information call 01548 288220 or peruse the website: thefatmonkey@hotmail.com