

Oskars lives up to its great reputation

A top location, attentive service and original cuisine. Oskars has it all, writes JENNIE DELL

AT OSKARS on Burleigh, bar manager Phil Woods surveys the view from his 'office' and still sighs with pleasure, after 12 years of working in this iconic restaurant right on the beachfront at Burleigh Heads. The last surfers are coming in from the darkening waves of the Pacific Ocean, as around the curve of the bay, the lights of Surfers Paradise bejewel the night sky. "Quite a few of the staff here

have been here for many years, since we opened at Burleigh," he says, "and some of us, including me, worked at the Coolangatta restaurant before we moved here. We're a great tight-knit family and really happy with the work we do."

Oskars has been a highly respected name in dining, and particularly in specialised seafood cuisine, on the Gold Coast for 28 years.

Since opening on Burleigh beach in 1997, it has earned a

reputation for its cuisine and service that has been recognised with multiple American Express Gold Plates including two Hall of Fame awards, and Restaurant and Catering Industry awards for Best Seafood, Informal Dining, Chef/Owner and Best Wine List.

Renowned for fine dining in a casual atmosphere, Oskars lived up to its reputation in every regard the night we were there. The staff were all friendly and attentive without any hint of intrusion.

From a choice of 12 entrees, which included oysters done four different ways and a variety of tempting seafood and vegetarian dishes, we both chose the Coffin Bay oysters; Kilpatrick for me and, for my companion, au naturel with a side dressing of soy sauce, sake and salmon pearls – salmon roe which explode into deliciousness when crunched. Meanwhile, diners at the next table were tucking into the restaurant's signature dish: Oskar prawns, deep fried with coconut, macadamia nuts and curry mayonnaise, with exclamations of delight.

"We change the menu every day," Phil Woods explains, bringing our chilled white wine to the table, "but we repeat the most popular dishes."

For main courses we had

black Angus eye fillet steak, served with sautéed mushrooms, garlic mascarpone and red wine sauce, and an ovenbaked rack of lamb resting on a bed of butternut pumpkin hash, with tomato and onion jam and a rosemary glaze.

Both dishes were elegantly presented and cooked to perfection, the meats tender and succulent and the accompaniments original and delicious. And – a blessed relief for me, who can't manage the same-sized meal as a man twice my weight – there was no embarrassment of waste, as the portions were moderate and absolutely adequate.

Best of all, they left room for us to try one of the mouth-watering offerings on the dessert menu by sharing a well-named 'Symphony of Sweet Sensations', a sampler dish composed of several of the day's gorgeous desserts.

The ambience of a great restaurant doesn't happen by chance.

At Oskars, the understated simplicity of design belies the depth of taste and style that has created a sense of being treasured guests in a unique and unmistakably Australian setting.

We lingered over coffee, feeling blessed to have enjoyed such a memorable dining experience.



Above: Bar manager Phil Woods enjoys the view from his 'office' at Oskars. Top: A Symphony of Sweet Sensations.

byo:

Fully licensed. Extensive award-winning wine list.

mains start from:

\$32.50

desserts start from:

\$14.50

contact details:

Phone 07 5576 3722.

reservation required:

Reservation recommended.

opening times:

Open seven days for lunch and dinner.

available for events:

Yes. Famed location for weddings.

special dietary options:

Vegetarian, gluten free

O S K A R S O N B U R L E I G H